

AN EVANGELISTIC MODEL
FOR THE LOCAL CHURCH IN TRANSITION

A Professional Project
Presented to
the Faculty of the
School of Theology at Claremont

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirement for the Degree
Doctor of Ministry

by
James McCray, Jr.

June 1977

This professional project, completed by

James McCray, Jr.

*has been presented to and accepted by the Faculty
of the School of Theology at Claremont in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of*

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

Faculty Committee

Robert J. Mose
James A. Douglas

April 15, 1977
Date

Joseph C. Hough, Jr.
Dean

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
Introduction to the Problem.....	1
Statement of the Problem.....	4
Analysis of the Problem.....	5
Delimitation.....	6
Theoretical Framework.....	7
Design.....	9
2. EVANGELISTIC UNDERSTANDINGS AND TECHNIQUES...	11
Introduction.....	11
Early Church.....	13
Eighteenth Century.....	40
Nineteenth Century.....	56
Twentieth Century.....	62
3. AN EVANGELISTIC MODEL FOR THE TRANSITIONAL CHURCH.....	68
Introduction.....	68
An Evangelistic Model For the Late 1970s...	75
A Critique of the Model.....	97
4. A STRATEGY FOR THE LOCAL CHURCH.....	109
Introduction.....	109
Goal.....	110
Specific Areas of Need.....	112
Initial Steps.....	115
Conclusion.....	117

BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	120
-------------------	-----

ABSTRACT

The ethnic minority church within the United Methodist Church is facing a crisis. The crisis is the result of two decades of transition, i.e., the changing of urban neighborhoods from predominately white to predominately black as a consequence of socio-economic forces and racism; and the rapid and unanticipated proliferation of underdeveloped ethnic churches. This crisis is evident throughout the Church as persons ask the question: Can countless small, disorganized local churches be renewed, so as to be capable of serving God and humankind in numerous communities experiencing change and disharmony across the nation? Within the local churches themselves, the crisis is visible in three problem areas: (1) an absence of innovative, enthusiastic leadership which can give needed direction and organization to the programmatic life of the congregation; (2) a lack of rapport with new communities which have come into being around these churches in the last two decades; and (3) an inadequate understanding of evangelism coupled with an inability to manage evangelistic activities so important for the strengthening of the congregation's life.

In order to reverse the trend toward mismanagement and disorganization within these local churches, the general Church has sought to share control and power within the United Methodist Church structure, in order to make available

increased funding for local church redevelopment and strengthening . This task must be continued. At the same time, the general Church has worked to develop leadership training resources for the purpose of enhancing the local church's ability to respond to this crisis. Work of this nature must not cease. The Church has also sought to recruit qualified ethnic clergy persons to provide an impetus for minority church growth and authentic development in the future. This in the long run may prove extremely helpful for the life of the whole Church. Finally, on too few occasions, the Church has simply closed ethnic minority churches caught in the "death grip" of transition and allowed them to begin anew. This option must always be held open. However, the local ethnic minority transitional church's problem areas can be attacked from another perspective. In many cases the problem areas can be transformed by the development of a local church evangelistic program that: (1) assists persons to cooperate with the Holy Spirit to bring others into a relationship of solidarity with God and humankind by faith in Christ; (2) fosters an individual experience of salvation and liberation through faith, attended by an expanding understanding of the Gospel's social relevance and a developing personality grounded in Christ's likeness; and (3) brings men and women into the messianic community, the service of reconciliation and the kingdom of God.

Such an evangelistic model is suggested in this project; for this project is a resource for United Methodist pastors and committees on evangelism in transitional situations. It will assist them in understanding the meaning of and organizing to conduct a broad evangelistic program in the late 70s. This task is fulfilled through the study of evangelistic models coming from four main periods of Church history: (1) the early Church, covering the first century of Church history; (2) the eighteenth century, focusing on Pietism and Methodism; (3) the nineteenth century, looking at the black church in America; and (4) the present, focusing on evangelism in the urban centers. On the basis of evangelistic elements pulled from these periods, an evangelistic model for the transitional church is proposed. The proposal is then critiqued from the standpoint of systems theory in order to suggest how a church might be organized around evangelism. Finally, there is a suggested strategy for developing this model in the local church.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Introduction to the Problem

Across the United Methodist Church a question of survival has been raised: "How will our ethnic minority Churches, in major urban centers, be stabilized and then strengthened?" This question has vexed concerned Methodists-- Methodists who are desirous of seeing a united, yet diverse and pluralistic, Church effectively and efficiently ministering to all persons regardless of race or location-- since the Church's Plan of Union was initiated by the 1968 General Conference. Ethnic minority pastors and congregations in particular have wrestled with this question, as they have watched local churches dwindle in strength and membership over the past half decade. Responses to the question generally have been formulated under three basic rubrics: (1) the sharing of control and power within the United Methodist Church structure, in order to make available increased funding for local church extension and program; (2) the development of leadership training resources and workshops for the purpose of enhancing the local church's ability to respond to specific and immediate issues and trends; and (3) the recruitment of qualified clergy leadership to fill a void created by the shortage of ethnic ministers, and to provide an impetus for meaningful

growth and authentic development in the future.

The importance and validity of this concern for the stabilization and development of ethnic minority churches reached national and international proportions at the United Methodist Church's General Conference in Portland, as well as during the months preceding the Conference. The last quarter of 1975 found the United Methodist General Council on Ministries (GCOM) and leaders from Asian, Black, Hispanic and Native churches focusing on the Church and its ethnic minority constituency. Out of this study emerged a General Conference "Missional Priority," with a \$5 million price tag, to stabilize and strengthen ethnic minority local churches. It would therefore seem United Methodism (a denomination of perhaps 10 million members) has recognized that a Church committed to "the continuously renewed grasp of the gospel of God's love in Christ and its application in the ceaseless crises of human existence," and determined in its invitation to all persons to participate in the proclamation of "the gospel in a new age" cannot fail to grasp the importance and necessity of developing its ministry to ethnic minorities-- a ministry which at this time can best be conducted through local churches of ethnic minority make-up.¹ Furthermore, it would appear that the General Conference has given credence to the long

¹"Our Theological Task," in The Book of Discipline (Nashville: United Methodist Pub. House, 1976), p. 71.

fostered notion that the ethnic minority Church-- although in so many ways inferior to the well equipped, well staffed majority Church-- is essential to the present and future existence of United Methodism within the North American context. Last, it would seem the General Conference has said "Yes"-- although softly-- to the distinct religious life within ethnic minority communities and has opened the door leading up the pathway to a truly inclusive denomination.² Thus, for the next quadrennium United Methodists of all persuasions will be endeavoring to respond to the issue of the survival and development of ethnic minority churches.

Now, the survival and development of ethnic minority churches, especially black churches, have been complicated by natural and normal forces within society and by the cultural phenomenon of racism, which have given rise to the so-called Transitional Church.³ From the 1950s until the early 1970s neighborhoods changed from white to black, from middle-class to lower class, giving rise to numerous new predominantly black churches in countless cities across the nation. However, these new churches have come into being as whites abandoned (partially or totally) large and old church buildings as minorities sought to join the

²Charles Hightower, "Ethnic Churches-- A Concern of All," Interpreter, XX:3 (March 1976), 18.

³James H. Davis and Woodie W. White, "Patterns of Pluralism" (unpublished report, United Methodist Church Missional Strategies Workshop, San Francisco, August 1976), p. 9f.

memberships. The result was the creation of churches with small memberships, with few young adults and young marrieds, with inadequate economic bases for the maintenance of edifices and the development of needed ministries. It is this rapid and unanticipated proliferation of minority churches which will adversely effect the task of strengthening the ethnic minority churches. For many of these churches have been born in the last 10 years from a labor of extreme chaos and enormous individual fear and pain, and now exist in communities which have grown up and begun to stabilize in the absence of a caring, nurturing church.

Statement of the Problem

Yet, speaking directly to the task of stabilizing and developing the particular local ethnic minority church, it must be seen that the process will be complicated by three specific factors which proceed from the conditions mentioned above:

- (1) the absence of innovative, vibrant leadership within United Methodism's ethnic minority constituencies, creating a lack of direction and internal organization;
- (2) non-existent to poor rapport with transitional communities, meaning a definite membership crisis; and
- (3) inadequate understanding and management of evangelism

activities, giving rise to the question across the Church: "Can ethnic minority churches survive beyond the 1980s within United Methodism?"

Analysis of the Problem

The individual local ethnic congregation finds itself rapidly growing old and weary from the ten to fourteen year labor against the dispersion of the church. The congregation is generally unable to initiate the long-needed transfusion which comes through the entry of young families and new members and feels alone and ensnared by an antagonistic, hostile community. It is the feeling of being inexorably gripped by these forces, and of not knowing or understanding any way to transcend the control of these forces, which is the greatest complicating factor and obstacle to be hurdled--if ethnic minority churches are to survive. No "connectional" help will be capable of turning back the dismal trend until local churches find some meaningful way to be the People of God in their own systems and communities. If a given local church is to live, then it must come to know and feel God's grace at work from within its own system and from this point of prevenient grace move forward to meet the grace which can flow through the "connectional system." For stabilization and then development to occur, the local pastor and the leadership of the church must have formulated a program which offers hope for the coming mastery over the

obvious trends and have converted the congregation from the wages of sin leading to death to hope imparted by participation in the program. It is exactly here that the work must be begun: in the development of a program which will reverse the trend toward mismanagement and disorganization and a closed system and will revive congregational ministries which give evidence of life and new hope. It is on this level that concentration must be centered and where resources must be focused.

Delimitation

A program development of this nature can be approached from a variety of perspectives from within the United Methodist polity and structure, ranging from education to stewardship. However, it would seem that evangelism (i.e., a new evangelistic model fashioned for this era and developed in the light of particular trends) best exhibits a potential scope which is broad enough to programmatically entail the renewal of the local congregation through the recruitment and development of new leadership and at the same time provide organizational direction for the local church toward the world-- the transitional community. In this period, wherein the local ethnic minority church within United Methodism is in jeopardy and faces the real possibility of being swept into oblivion by forces within and without, should the Church not begin by understanding evangelism

and by developing new models grounded in and founded upon the witness of the Church of antiquity? Should she not return to the historical point of departure following the end of the prophetic and apostolic periods? Should she not return with new vigor to the work outlined by Christian evangelists? Should she not begin a new evangelistic program which comes to life after theological and historical examination of evangelistic models from the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries?

This, then, is the task of this work: to provide a training resource for United Methodist pastors and committees on evangelism in transitional situations which will assist them in understanding the meaning of, and organizing to conduct, a broad evangelistic program in the late 70s.

Theoretical Framework

The basic assumptions undergirding this work are: (1) an understanding of the meaning and practice of evangelism for today can emerge through study of biblical and historical evangelistic models; (2) once an understanding of evangelism has been cultivated, it can be adapted to address local church problems through the utilization of systems theory and analysis; (3) evangelism understood from the systems-theory perspective will assist pastors and committees on evangelism in managing the process of evangelizing the community and in recruiting and training leadership; and (4)

persons in local churches, who are committed to the renewal of the church through new evangelistic models and work are themselves in love with God and neighbor.

There are several terms which are important to the meaning and development of this work and which must be discussed as key terms in the flow of the work.

Evangelism is herein understood to be: (1) the cooperation of persons with the Holy Spirit to bring individuals into a living vital relationship with God and with one another through a crucial faith in Jesus Christ, the Son of God; (2) the fostering among individuals of a definitive experience of salvation through faith, an expanding understanding of the social relevance of the Good News, and a developing personality grounded in Christ's likeness; and (3) the striving by persons to bring others into the kingdom of God (obedience to the will of God), the communion of the Church, and into the service of reconciliation.

Systems Theory, as it is herein applied to the local congregation is understood to suggest that the Church is: (1) a combination of activities and events with the whole being more efficient than the parts, and with the parts being interdependent; (2) a process (functioning within a given community and environment) which is always dependent upon human and material input and output; and (3) a system suffering from a particular problem which systems

analysis can help overcome through focused planning and clear goal setting, coupled with adequate management.

Transitional Church is the local ethnic minority congregation which has within the last ten to fifteen years changed racially from all white to black, brown, or yellow while its community has changed both racially and economically from all white to minority and from middle to lower class. The Transitional Church is that local congregation suffering from (1) a leadership crisis, (2) poor rapport with its community, and (3) a need for a new evangelistic program model. The Transitional Church is that local congregation desirous of working to become a new congregation, reflecting the character of its community and the religious values of its people.

Leadership team is herein seen to be those persons, primarily of the local church work area on evangelism, who are prepared to study evangelism from the theological and historical perspectives, who are committed to planning and goal setting for the purpose of creating and conducting an evangelistic model that will meet the congregation's needs; and who will manage the on-going program, training new persons who are recruited to fill leadership positions.

Design

The next chapter will explore evangelism from a historical perspective and will surface the evangelistic

understandings of and techniques utilized by Christians in four periods: (1) the early Church, (2) the 18th Century, (3) the 19th Century, and (4) the 20th Century. In the third chapter an evangelistic model will be proposed for adoption by local congregations. The model will be formulated on the basis of the elements drawn from successful historical models which can be adapted in the light of realities confronting the transitional Church. This model will then be critiqued from the systems theory perspective, so as to suggest to local churches how evangelism, when properly understood and managed, can serve as the organizing and leadership-building instrument within the Church and can direct the local church into a new relationship with its community and world.

The fourth chapter will pull all of the foregoing information together into an organizing and planning resource for local churches-- a resource kit that will assist pastors and lay persons in educating, training and deploying designated persons for evangelistic activities in the congregation and community on the basis of the proposed model.

Chapter 2

EVANGELISTIC UNDERSTANDINGS AND TECHNIQUES

Introduction

The report coming out of the 1975 Consultation on the Ethnic Minority Local Church in the United Methodist Church identified evangelism as the central and most crucial objective before all ethnic minority churches within the denomination. This report called for the development of new and vital forms of evangelism while preserving within these forms the positive values and activities which have historically distinguished Christian evangelism from crude proselytizing. The crucial concern of all minorities was the development of a new method for the proclamation of the Gospel, designed in such a way as to meet the needs of churches experiencing particular difficulties in the instruction and training of their members for the work of outreach and community impact.¹

On the basis of this report, important questions for us to ask would seem to be: What is the church's evangelistic heritage; and what are the positive values which ought to be identified and maintained as guidelines for evangel-

¹Daily Christian Advocate, IV (Portland: April 27, 1976), Advanced Edition D.

ism in this period? Another question is, of course: how would this heritage, and these values and models determine or limit Christian evangelism in the last half of this decade? And a related question might be: through the study of the church's evangelistic heritage, what models for outreach and community impact are suggested which are applicable to the present ethnic minority church?

This chapter seeks to disclose the evangelistic understandings and techniques which characterized Christian evangelism: first, in the early Church; second, in the next great period of widespread Christian expansion-- i.e., the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; and third, in the past two decades of this present century. Subsequent to the disclosure and study of understandings and techniques derived from these periods, the next chapter will propose a model for outreach and community impact in the late 70s and 80s-- a model based on the problems and realities of the black United Methodist Church in transition. Thus, this chapter's purpose is to outline historically and theologically the meaning and content of evangelism; and to provide a foundation from which black churches can visualize the implications of this history and theology for their contemporary task of defining evangelism in such a way as to strengthen the black church as a whole; and of intensifying involvement in the broader community.

Early Church

If we are to suggest evangelistic models for the revival and development of the ethnic minority church-- and the black church in particular-- we must begin with the Christian Church of the first century. During the first century the Christian movement grew from a small group or sect within Judaism, located in Palestine, into a definite religious party existing throughout the Roman world. In the first century Christianity developed, despite the death of its founder and the persecution of its leaders, to challenge the pagan religions of the Roman empire and the much older Judaism of the diaspora. This first-century expansion is essential to the development of a present-day model of evangelism; for this expansion-- in these early years after the death of Jesus of Nazareth-- occurred even though the Church found itself in a life and death situation. Needless to say, this situation parallels the present condition of the ethnic minority church within United Methodism, at least with respect to the issue of survival within an ordered and some times hostile religious context and environment. The early Christians were forced to decide either to go on professing their peculiar experience of the grace and love of God, as revealed in Jesus of Nazareth, or to give up this commission and thereby disappear back into Judaism. In the same way, ethnic minorities within United Methodism are now at the point of choosing either to go on professing

and confessing their unique religious experience or to vanish from within United Methodism-- the denomination which has long been exalted for its pluralistic composition and variety in worship forms. If the ethnic minority church is to survive and develop, then it must somehow capture and appropriate the evangelistic models utilized by the early Church as it sought to overcome persecution and death; and it must come to a working knowledge of the concepts and motivational elements which underlie evangelism in the first-century. Therefore, it is here, in the experience of the first-century Church, that we begin the quest for insight relative to models for contemporary evangelism.

An initial question for this portion of the inquiry is: by what means was the new religion and its faith spread throughout Palestine and then to the Roman empire? In the decades immediately subsequent to Jesus' death and resurrection the new faith was spread primarily through the preaching and related deeds of the Twelve followers of Jesus; and by persons who were appointed by these followers for specific work within the newly formed community in Jerusalem. This preaching took place in three stages as the followers of Jesus sought to proclaim their story first to their Jewish brethren. This preaching in its earliest stage proclaimed, "The kingdom of God is at hand; repent" (Matthew x.7ff); the second stage incorporated the confession of the resurrection, "The risen Jesus is the Messiah (Matthew x. 32)

and will return from heaven to establish his kingdom;" and the third stage examined the law and the prophets of the Old Testament in order to demonstrate that Jesus Christ was the fulfillment of the Old Testament promise, and to provide the moral principle upon which members of the messianic church, who had been called by the Holy Spirit, were to live their lives.²

In most instances the preaching was pronouncement intended to win over those who did not believe Jesus to be the Christ. This winning over of persons to Christ was a process involving the securing of "an initial response of faith and obedience;" and then the building up of the community of all believers by means of increasing the convert's knowledge and understanding of the grace of God, coupled with a growing obedience to the will of the Father of Jesus Christ.³ It must be emphasized here that the evangelistic mission to the Jews, especially as it was first conducted by the Twelve, was for the most part a quiet working that avoided open and public preaching, and which was characterized by house to house visitations. In and around Jerusalem the Twelve could be found traveling two by two, staying with persons who welcomed them, and aiming to initiate households and towns into the spirit of the Gospel by

²Adolf Harnack, The Expansion of Christianity in the First Three Centuries (New York: Putnam, 1904), I, 105-106.

³Floyd V. Filson, Three Crucial Decades (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1963), p. 42f.

personal contact. As the Twelve traveled, they sought to introduce persons to the sayings of their Lord and to help them understand the life of the Lord Jesus by means of the Messianic Old Testament prophecies.⁴

As converts to this new religion began to see in it something totally new and substantially different from Judaism-- a "new level of religion" motivated by the Spirit and leading toward regeneration-- a breach was completed between the new faith known as Christianity and that of the Jews.⁵ This breach became clearest in the minds of the Gentiles who had come into contact with this religion. These Gentile Christians soon came to see themselves as the "new people of God who had succeeded the old."⁶ These Gentile Christians and then the renowned Apostle Paul took the Good News beyond the Palestinian borders into the Graeco-Roman world.

The medium for this expansion was again preaching. To the pagans the Christians preached the "living and true God," Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the judge who secures

⁴Ernst von Dobschutz, The Apostolic Age (London: Elsom, 1910), p. 27f.

⁵Harnack, I, 62.

⁶Ibid., I, 67.

the believer against the wrath to come, and the call to faith in and service to the living God, and faith and hope in Jesus as his Son.⁷ If the content of the preaching to the Jews and the preaching to the Gentiles is compared, then three additional elements will become evident in the latter: (1) the title the Son of God being given to Jesus; (2) the assertion that Christ dies for the sins of the world; and (3) the assertion that the exalted Lord intercedes for the believers.⁸ However, the purpose and aim of the preaching were the same: namely, to win one over to the faith in Jesus Christ, and to initiate the person into the spirit of the Gospel and into the messianic community.

It is clear, then, that the first and primary model of evangelism in the early Church-- both in Jerusalem and Palestine, and in the Graeco-Roman world-- was preaching. This preaching was conducted by Apostles (those persons who had lived with Jesus and others who were added to this number), who proclaimed publicly and privately the message about the Christ and who sought to win unbelievers to the faith in Jesus Christ. This preaching was conducted by individuals who traveled throughout the known world bearing the message both in word and deed; for the Apostles or

⁷Ibid., I, 108.

⁸C. H. Dodd, The Apostolic Preaching And Its Development (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1960), p. 25.

evangelists become the examples of Christ to those to whom they preached.⁹ The Apostle embodied in his very person the "good news" that in this Christ Jesus, who is the Son of God and the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy, all persons are created new. In a sense, the Apostle became the Christ, "the word of God" not only in what he said but in what he became.¹⁰ In the person of the Apostle the unbeliever was able to perceive the new age which was about to dawn and to respond to this concrete manifestation of the new in positive and substantial ways.

Closely related to the evangelistic model of preaching was that of teaching. In fact, teaching and preaching often occurred in the same act of an Apostle; but for the sake of clarity they are separated here. Those who had been close to Jesus heard him calling for a transformation of character which was ethical in nature. Thus, much of the Master's work was along the lines of ethical teaching; and the Apostles carried this component of his ministry over into their evangelistic work. Yet, while the teaching of the Apostles was in large portions ethical instruction, it also occasionally took the form of "reasoned commendation of Christianity to persons interested but not yet convinced," and "the exposition of theological doctrine."¹¹

⁹Urban T. Holmes, The Future Shape of Ministry (New York: Seabury Press, 1971), p. 8.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 9.

¹¹Filson, p.30. (cf. Dodd, p.7).

It would appear that as the expansion of Christianity took hold in many areas of the pagan world, and as the messianic community began to take visible form in cities the role of the teachers became more important and influential. Teachers became responsible for catechetical activities in which persons were instructed in sound doctrine to guard against the incursion of virulent and infectious elements such as dualism, docetism, etc.¹² At the same time, Christian teachers of philosophy took advantage of the Graeco-Roman custom of lecturing in halls in order to instruct the pagan world on the theological and ethical tenets of Christianity.¹³

The one essential aim of Christian teaching in the pagan world did become that of working out "the main lines of a Christian code of conduct by a process of education"-- a code of conduct which avoided the pitfalls of pagan laxity on the one hand, and Jewish legalism and strictness on the other hand.¹⁴ However, its dominant purpose remained identical to that of preaching; i.e., to win persons to a faith response founded upon obedience and participation in grace. Thus, the Apostles are often pictured in the New

¹²Harnack, I, 111f.

¹³Kenneth Scott Latourette, A History of the Expansion of Christianity (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1937), I, 116.

¹⁴Dobschutz, p. 65.

Testament arguing in market places and in the halls of major cities, or as teaching from the scriptures.

It seems that as time progressed, the work of the teacher superceded that of the Apostle, who traveled from place to place preaching the gospel. As the Church began to take definite form in many cities, and small, permanent groups were established, the catechist became extremely important to the life of the messianic community as it sought to live in a Gentile world under the influence of idol worship and gnostic philosophy. Therefore, it is clear that teaching was an essential evangelistic activity within the early Church, and that it became increasingly more important as the first century ended.

A third means by which the new religion and faith was expanded throughout the Roman empire was the evangelistic activity of healing. Under the rubric of healing may be listed the work of miraculous healing and the "interposition of divine power to prove the gospel;" as well as the "strong spirit of fraternity and mutual aid which pervaded" the early Christian communities.¹⁵

As the Apostles and early evangelists traveled throughout the Graeco-Roman world proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ a definite ministry of healing was developed as the continuation of the ministry and practice of Jesus.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 41.

Among the poor, the burdened, and the outcast this ministry of healing could be viewed as the "practice of love" and the kingdom of God being established in their pain-filled and sterile world-reality.¹⁶ In the healing activities of the Christian community true peace and liberty, which were important kerygmatic concepts used to describe the new world, became manifest and meaningful in the present age. In this healing of the sick and aid to the downtrodden the old systems were radically surmounted, and such persons could visualize themselves as the new people of God-- the Father of Jesus Christ.

No doubt this was probably one of the strongest and most convincing forms of evangelism; for it met a large portion of the pagan populace at the point of greatest need-- i.e., the need for a Savior who could rescue the body from physical distress, as well as the soul from perdition due to immorality and sin.¹⁷ This ministry of healing did much to make Christianity an important force in the Roman world; for it attracted to the new religion the persons who most needed and desired a new creation, and who were most prepared to repent-- to give up their old lives for a new life.

¹⁶Harnack, I, 25.

¹⁷J. G. Davies, The Early Christian Church: A History Of Its First Five Centuries (Garden City: Doubleday, 1967), p. 44.

Over and over again the scriptures testify to this fact: that many persons turned to the faith in Christ as a result of the healing ministry of the Apostles.¹⁸

While all of the above mentioned evangelistic models are to be found in the ministry of the early Church, the principal means by which the new faith and religion were spread appear to be personal contact and example on the part of new converts. The principal agents of the spread were men and women "who earned their livelihood in some purely secular manner and spoke of their faith to those whom they met in this natural fashion."¹⁹ In the early Church there were no elaborate evangelistic programs or missionary machinery; and in fact, it is not even likely that all Christians of the first three centuries aggressively sought converts to the faith.²⁰ The major stimulus for the spread of Christianity may quite possibly have been the widespread dissatisfaction among persons of the pagan world with religious and social alternatives.

Yet, it would seem that individual Christians of the first century were: (1) "evangelical," meaning that the Christians of this period knew they owed their new lives

¹⁸Stanley C. Brown, Evangelism in the Early Church: A Study in the Book of the Acts of the Apostles (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963), p. 37f.

¹⁹Latourette, I, p. 116.

²⁰Davies, p. 116.

to the gospel; and (2) held an evangelistic theology in that they possessed a gift from God which had to be shared.²¹

It was the individual and communal sharing of the meaning of this new life in the world and the example set as members strove to live out this new life which attracted unbelievers to the new faith. The early Christians, therefore, were first interested in the life of the community and in the manner in which members of that community lived; and then in the decision of the world with respect to this new Way.

Having determined the means by which the new religion and its faith were spread first throughout Palestine and then to the Graeco-Roman world, the following questions become important: What was the underlying motivation for this evangelistic activity? Why did the Apostles, in particular, believe it to be their primary and singular task to preach the Gospel, to teach its true meaning, and to heal the sick and uplift the downtrodden? In the following pages these questions will be answered through a study beginning with Matthew x and Matthew xxviii. 16-20. We begin with the Gospel According to Matthew, for there we find two important theological issues for the development of this work: (1) the evangelist's strong emphasis upon eschatology; and (2) his concern for instruction within the

²¹Ralph W. Quere, Evangelistic Witness (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1975), p. 11.

early Church. The Gospel of Matthew combines the eschatological with the ecclesiastical-- i.e., the coming of the Kingdom of God and the strong judgment arising from the ministry of Christ due to this fact; and the demands made upon those who would enter the kingdom, which this Gospel develops in terms of guidelines for the conduct of the continuing community down through history.²²

In the Gospel of Matthew the dawning of the kingdom of God, which is uniquely manifested in Jesus of Nazareth who lives, dies and is resurrected to judge the world, continues in the community called together and founded by the Christ after His resurrection. This community is to be a "sign" indicating the end; and is to be ordered and managed in a particular fashion-- a fashion which is prescribed by the risen Lord Himself. This community is the Church, which is to replace Israel as God's new suffering people.²³

Prior to looking at specific verses of the tenth chapter of Matthew, which will assist in the answering of our questions, let us begin with an overview of the tenth chapter. While chapter ten cannot be considered an evangelistic program for all time, a world program, or a report

²²W.F. Albright and C.S. Mann, Matthew (Garden City: Doubleday, 1971), p. lxxxii f.

²³Ibid., p. lxxxii.

from the time of Jesus it nonetheless is important for our study because here we gain a glimpse of the perspective from which evangelism was pursued by the early Church in Palestine; as well as something of the Church's self-understanding and style of activity during the period in which Matthew was written. This view is provided in the Matthean theological framework. Matthew's theological framework is constructed in such a way as to highlight the fact that the proclamation of the good news is confrontative. The Gospel of Matthew paints the picture of the old order, Judaism, being confronted by the word of God in the interest of a new order, the messianic community, now breaking into history. This word of God calls Israel to be Israel and the Jews who already have surrendered to Christ to renew their life. It calls them to abandon everything, to make a decision for Christ, and to follow his command. Here in chapter ten the call is "particular," directed to Israel only, and it stands in tension with the "universal" call to follow the Christ in chapter twenty-eight. Therefore, it is evident that evangelism is an activity which affects the Church, as a part of the old order, and the entire world with a demand to become a part of a new order in Christ.

In this chapter the evangelist frames the message in private instruction given by Jesus to his disciples. Here the Gospel brings the reader face to face with the Son

of Man asserting the nature of his vocation, and the vocation of all who would follow him. In this chapter one meets the Lord of the Church demanding allegiance to his message and person.²⁴ In Matthew x 16-42 the importance of this loyalty to Christ and his message is seen as Jesus addresses the disciples. The theme of Matthew x. 5-15 has to do with the proper arrangement and ordering of the Church, which has been founded by Jesus.²⁵ In these verses strict orders are given to all disciples as they depart from the Lord. These rules have to do with the disciples' and the early Church's evangelistic activity, which is initially confined to Israel; while the injunctions set out in x. 16-23 have to do with evangelism subsequent to the period of Jesus' own ministry and death. The Matthean theme of the Church as the post-resurrection community, the note of judgment and the "last things" are expressed in Matthew x. 28-33.²⁶ The final material which Matthew places at the end of this chapter, verses 40-42, has to do with the price which must be paid by all those who would come after Jesus by picking up the cross.²⁷ This whole chapter pictures the disciples, and the Church by implication, as the proclaimers

²⁴Ibid., p. lvi.

²⁵Ibid., p. lxxxii.

²⁶Ibid., p. lxxxiii.

²⁷Ibid., p. lxxxiii.

of the kingdom of God-- the new community which will serve as the sign of the end time, which is presently not fully consummated within human history. It is easy to see how this chapter is both eschatological and ecclesiastical.

As we seek to answer the question pertaining to the motivation of the Apostles and the early Church, the verses of interest and instruction are 1-15; for these have to do with the task and mission of the Twelve (and by implication that of the Church of Jesus Christ).

And he called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every infirmity... These twelve Jesus sent out, charging them, "Go nowhere among the Gentiles, and enter no town of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And preach as you go, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.' Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons. You received without pay, give without pay. Take no gold, nor silver, nor copper in your belts, no bag for your journey, nor two tunics, nor sandals, nor a staff; for the laborer deserves his food. And whatever town or village you enter, find out who is worthy in it, and stay with him until you depart. As you enter the house, salute it. And if the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it, but if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. And if any one will not receive you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet as you leave that house or town. Truly I say to you, it shall be more tolerable on the day of judgment for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah than for that town.

In the first verse of this pericope we meet with the presupposition that Jesus initially called his followers as learners, as persons who are to take part in his ministry; and then they are appointed as "apostles" to minister to others in the power of Jesus and in His authority. This authority which Jesus gives to his disciples is the power

to teach and perform deeds of healing, exorcizing, proclaiming the kingdom and even raising the dead.²⁸ The important factor here is that Matthew gives a picture of the ministry of Jesus, as well as the training process of the disciples, reaching a point and time where some were prepared to work away from the Master in order that there could be additional sources for the proclamation of the Gospel. This appointing of the apostles may also reflect Matthew's use of the tradition concerning the twelve as "eschatological regents."²⁹ They are now to be seen as heads of the new community and they will judge the new community in the eschaton. Matthew makes it clear that the Gospel is the important issue, while the persons who preached it are secondary. It is the work and not those who do the work which is glorified. The Messiah had equipped the first members of the messianic community with the authority to spread the Gospel, even as he had done.

The fifth verse begins the charge to the newly empowered Apostles. In this verse and the one which follows, the Apostles are given their immediate commission, which is to go first to the Jews. (Later, in Matthew xxviii. 19-20, which we shall come to presently, the Apostles are given

²⁸A. Marcus Ward, The Gospel According to St. Matthew (London: Epworth Press, 1961), p. 66.

²⁹Rudolf Bultmann, Theology of the New Testament (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951), I, 37.

their long-range, international task.) While scholars have had much to say about this immediate charge, it seems that the Apostles were initially to deal only with the members of their own nation and religion-- with those who had first been called to serve as God's chosen people. Christ himself extended his compassion to the "lost sheep of Israel" for they were without a shepherd and had no one to guide and teach them. It was the initial task of the Apostles to confront and replace the blind guides within Israel who led the people of God; and to lead God's people to a new life, in a new order.³⁰ The Twelve were to represent Christ and to serve as the heads of the reconstituted twelve tribes of Israel.³¹ The implications of this are broad and far reaching, but it is obvious that Matthew sees the Apostles as the foundation for the restoration of the chosen people of God in the new messianic community called the Church.

The seventh verse is the command to preach and travel-- or rather travel as you preach. There was to be no permanent organization established at this time. Instead the Apostles are pictured as "field preachers" awakening the desires of the people of Israel for the salvation which was to come, and as reminding them of the consequences of refusing to heed the call. They were to proclaim the near-

³⁰William Hendriksen, Matthew (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1973), p. 98.

³¹Albright and Mann, p. 118.

ness of the kingdom of God, and to inform all who would listen that the Messiah and the kingdom were realities when persons are ready to receive them.³² It is more apparent in parallel texts (Mark vi. 7-13) that the purpose of their preaching was to produce repentance and a change in mind among those who heard and to bring them into the kingdom of God! The command is to walk the streets, fields, and the roads; to lift up their voices in the open air, so as to be heard by all; and to proclaim the message which had been given to them. This message was: turn from the way of misery, death and perdition; receive the communication of divine wisdom; and become children of the light.³³ This turning was an immediate necessity, because the reign of God among persons was near; and this reign was about to be felt "more powerfully than ever before" in the hearts and lives of persons.³⁴ In the light of the nearness of salvation there was an urgent need for repentance; and the Apostles were given the responsibility of increasing the harvest into the kingdom by their proclamation of the Gospel. Therefore, they preached: "The kingdom of heaven is at hand."

In verse eight there are themes which scholars

³²Hendriksen, p. 98.

³³Ibid., p. 98.

³⁴Ibid., p. 457.

believe to be common in the context of mission work. The four activities which are a part of the Apostles' task represent "signs" of the dawning of the kingdom; and such signs are to aid in the proclamation of the kingdom's nearness. However, these activities have at least two other important functions within the life of the individual. They further the "true readiness" and "genuine and earnest desire" for the reign of God which is so essential if one is to participate in the kingdom.³⁵ Such "signs" enhance the possibilities that persons will truly and ultimately decide for God against all that is earthly. Also, these activities permit the Apostles to bear witness to the healing powers that are already active in the present, because the Lord's Anointed has come into the world.³⁶ Therefore, these "signs" or activities make it possible for the disciples to truly bring salvation to towns and homes, which is the command given to them in the verses following. These "signs" must not be understood as the basis for repentance or conversion, but rather as activities on the part of the Church which make it easier for persons to decide for the new order.

The conclusion of verse eight admonished the Apostles neither to preach for hire, nor to make secular what was

³⁵Bultmann, I, 21.

³⁶Gunther Bornkamm, Jesus of Nazareth (New York: Harper & Row, 1960), p. 149.

strictly spiritual in nature. The Gospel had been given and taught to them freely; and this Gospel had come from God. Therefore, the Apostles were not to view themselves as professional healers but as preachers of the free salvation come from God. In this sense, the Church is to address those who are oppressed by the old order; and urge them to be free and thus demonstrate the presence of the kingdom.

The final verses of this pericope have been called "an action parable of the nearness of the kingdom."³⁷ These verses suggest that those who were to go forth with the Gospel were to go depending only on God and His ability to care and provide; they were to go, according to the Talmud, "in the same spirit as you would go to the Temple services;" and they were to go exhibiting a detached spirit with respect to the things of this world. It must be mentioned that the concern and emphasis here is upon freedom from care rather than from comfort.³⁸ The Apostle must place all care and concern upon the proclamation of the Gospel, rather than on personal want; and must by force become a stranger and pilgrim for that Gospel. All the Apostle could expect was maintenance and the hospitality customarily given to religious teachers. The underlying issue throughout this text is that the kingdom was dawning,

³⁷Ward, p. 67.

³⁸Hendrikson, p. 458.

time was exceedingly precious, and all energy was to be spent in activity which was fruitful. The job of the Twelve and the Matthean community was to afford as many of their fellow Jews as possible the opportunity to be prepared for God's kingdom, i.e., the new order.

This then is Matthew's understanding of the importance of the evangelistic process among the Jews in the area of Palestine. In these verses we have been confronted by the motivational factors and evangelistic elements which characterized the work of the early Matthean Church in its struggle with Judaism. Before summarizing and highlighting the important elements of this "immediate" evangelistic activity let us look briefly at the "distant" or long-range commission which concludes Matthew's Gospel and is in tension with the preceding text. By way of comparing and combining elements from the two texts we shall be more able to satisfactorily answer the questions concerning us: Why did the Apostles believe it to be their primary and singular task to preach the Gospel? What was the motivating factor for their active evangelism?

As we turn to Matthew xxviii. 16-20, let us look at this text in the light of the Evangelist's emphasis upon the continuing work of the community founded by the Messiah; and with our minds upon the earlier recounted expansion and movement of the young Church into and through the Graeco-Roman world. It is here that elements only suggested

elsewhere, concerning the expansion of the kingdom of God beyond the "old covenant community of Israel," become explicit and formative for the future of the whole Church.³⁹

Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. And when they saw him they worshiped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age."

In this last portion of the Gospel of Matthew the struggle between the old, Jewish order and the new order embodied in the kingdom of God reaches its climax. Matthew visualizes the new as being rooted in and growing out of the old, but now it fulfills the old. This new order is now to expand-- as an act of God-- to include the whole of humankind. So, as Matthew ten was particularistic in scope, these last four verses burst out of this limited view to engulf the universal. Here Matthew gives us a full-blown picture of the Christ of faith, the universal Lord and Savior of heaven and earth, the rabbi with his ethical concern for the observance of his commandments, and the Church's belief that it had acquired its evangelistic thrust from an appearance of the risen Lord which gloriously fulfilled the old dispensation found with Israel.

Our specific interest in this text begins with verse

³⁹Albright and Mann, p. 361.

eighteen. Again we meet with the term "authority." However, here it is the risen Christ taking full possession of that 'glory' which was his before the foundation of the world. This authority extends beyond Jesus' power in preaching and teaching to the area of "divine prerogatives."⁴⁰ It is important to note that here Matthew is discussing "revelation."⁴¹ In this verse we encounter the unquestionable faith of the Matthean community: Jesus had both united the heavenly and earthly spheres, and received the universal power and authority of the one True God. The authority given to Christ and the new situation of openness, freedom and communal life which it creates is the act of God. And it is in the light of this faith and its attending self-understanding that the remaining verses must be understood.

In the following verse it is this Jesus, the risen Christ of faith, who commands the disciples to "go"-- for the purpose of making disciples. Here the risen Lord calls for an aggressive movement on behalf of the kingdom of God, which will add to the numbers of followers and learners of the Christ. These new followers are now explicitly to come from all peoples. Thus, Matthew now identifies the

⁴⁰ Benjamin J. Hubbard, The Matthean Redaction of a Primitive Apostolic Commissioning (Missoula: Society of Biblical Literature, 1974), p. 79.

⁴¹ M. Jack Suggs, Wisdom, Christology and Law in Matthew's Gospel (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970), p. 124.

Christ as the Servant of God, who "proclaims justice to the Gentiles" and in whose name the "Gentiles hope."⁴² This then is the final fulfillment of the old order and its expansion in order to create a new, universal "people of God," who are to live in a new, Messianic community of sharing and open relations. The new community by its very nature will explode the rigidity and narrowness of Judaism and bring into being a new ethos, with new understandings. Now, even the Gentiles are to repent and place their faith in the Servant of God, and by this become members of the Church. In this act of bringing the nations into a relationship with Himself, God has truly demonstrated the new order and His new intentions for the world.

Now we come to the injunction to baptize the new disciples in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Whether one sees the triadic baptismal formula as authentic or not, the command to baptize is clear and authentic. Baptism describes the act of initiating new members into the Messianic community; and it is presupposed by repentance, and faith in "Jesus as Messiah and Lord;" with the baptism "implying forgiveness."⁴³ This act was believed to signify "a sharing of Christ's death" and its effect was to bring the person into the new order by way of

⁴²Hubbard, p. 86. (cf. Isaiah xlii. 1-4).

⁴³Albright and Mann, p. 362.

the body of Christ.⁴⁴

In addition to baptizing, the eleven are instructed to make new followers by teaching them to observe all that Christ had enjoined them during his earthly ministry. The text here suggests that "the instruction envisaged... is post-baptismal, a practice well known during the apostolic period."⁴⁵ The emphasis appears to be upon bringing new followers into the knowledge of God and of His work of mercy and salvation through the life, ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus. Jesus had taught on the mount, so the disciples must continue this practice; but they must above all instruct on the basis of what Jesus taught and commanded.

Matthew is obviously demonstrating an interest in the Church and is explicitly drawing out regulations for the Church to use as it continues its life within time. Until "the close of the age," the community of disciples is admonished to bring others into the learning and serving relationship with God, through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ. This radically new covenant is to occur in a definite, prescribed manner: preaching, teaching and

⁴⁴Walter Bauer, A Greek-English Lexicon (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), p. 131.

⁴⁵Hubbard, p. 89.

baptizing into the messianic community.

From the foregoing discussion it should be clear that the Apostles and the early Christians were induced to evangelistic activities by historical and theological considerations and influences. Why was the early Church so enthusiastic about its evangelism? It was enthusiastic because it found itself in a tense ideological struggle with Judaism for survival. The Church was enthusiastic because it became absolutely necessary to make an "apology" for the events surrounding the life and death of Jesus, which so many Jews failed to understand. It was on fire because of the faith in Christ, which seemed foolish to the world. Yes, the Church was inspired by the new ethos which developed as the consequence of persons placing their faith in the risen Lord and obediently seeking to serve him by working to facilitate the new, messianic community. This faith in Christ-- his life of preaching, teaching and healing-- influenced the community's entire existence and thinking; and, thus, it was compelled to follow and do as he had done. Related to this was the historical remembrance of those who had known him and who recalled his words: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations..." This they understood to occur in the context of evangelistic activities such as preaching, teaching, healing and baptizing. These men and women who had known the man Jesus and experienced him as the risen Lord became models for those

who were to join the faith, and enter the community. On the basis of this model the new disciples were likewise motivated to serve in the evangelistic work. They served because entry into the messianic community was understood, through instruction, to mean receiving the task of evangelism; for this task had been historically delegated to all who loved the Lord.

Yet, there was simultaneously a theological motivation for this work of evangelism. The Christ who had suffered, been raised from the dead and united heaven and earth, had also brought into being a new eschatological age-- an age of fundamental uniqueness! It was an age characterized by the communion with God in truth, mercy and love. In this age the seeds of the kingdom of God had been planted and were soon to bear their long anticipated fruits. The beginnings of this kingdom was the organization of the new community of God's chosen people. It was into this eschatological community, a community of fellowship and love, that persons were to be drawn-- like fish into the nets of the fishermen; and it was the task of the Apostles and their disciples to draw persons into this community. This activity occurred only through the proclamation of the Good News and the doing of deeds which were themselves "signs" of the new age. Thus, the Apostles and the early Church proclaimed their faith to the world:

Not "the idea of God"..., but God himself in omnipotent action; not a "doctrine of salvation," but salvation,

the living deed; not a Weltanschauung, but Christ.⁴⁶

Their motivation was the happening which was going on all around them: an event based on the past, yes; an event which would come to fulfillment in the future, yes; but most of all, an event of life and death importance and consequence NOW.⁴⁷

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life-- the life was made manifest, and we saw it, and testify to it, and proclaim to you the eternal life which was with the Father and was made manifest to us-- that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you may have fellowship with us; and our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.

I John i. 1-3

On the basis of their understanding of God and his saving activity in the world, the early Church was motivated to practice evangelism.

Eighteenth Century

The expansion and spread of the Christian faith, and therefore, the practice of evangelism, can be divided into four roughly definable periods: (1) "the first five centuries after the death of Christ;" (2) the period from 500 to 1500 A.D.; (3) the three centuries between 1500 and

⁴⁶James S. Stewart, A Faith to Proclaim (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953), p. 16.

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 17.

1800; and (4) the period from around 1800 to the present, which is "really a continuation of the third."⁴⁸ In this section we want to take up the movements, and the evangelistic models exhibited in these movements, that emerged at the close of the third evangelistic period or just as the impact of spiritual apathy, created by the "enlightenment," began to hit and reorder the missionary and evangelistic impulses of Roman Catholic and Protestant churches. To be sure, there are numerous movements and attending models which could serve as studies from this period. However, we shall narrow attention to two movements, which have most influenced today's black United Methodism: first the Pietist movement, established in Frankfort by Philip Jacob Spener, at the close of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth century; and second, the Evangelical Revival of the eighteenth century which gave rise to Methodism. While we shall investigate the motivating theological and social factors of these movements, our main emphasis will be upon organization and structures established to facilitate the proclamation of the gospel and to cultivate the new persons within a new relationship with God through Jesus Christ. This part of the paper will focus finally upon the evangelistic model demonstrated by John Wesley, the founder of

⁴⁸Kenneth Scott Latourette, "Pre-Nineteenth-Century Evangelism: Its Outstanding Characteristics," in Evangelism (New York: International Missionary Council, 1939), III, 2.

Methodism; for it is here that we find the immediate tradition which shapes the present and future of the ethnic minority church with United Methodism.

It was in Frankfort, just subsequent to the Thirty Years' War, that Pietism began. Frankfort, a city of great importance to Germany, had experienced widespread destruction during the war; and at the time of Philip Jacob Spener (1635-1705) was struggling for recovery and revival. It was in this city where immorality and sin of all kinds due to the war were prevalent, where orphans were numerous, and where spirituality was at a low ebb that Philip Spener initiated his movement to nourish the Christian life of persons in his congregation and expressed the conviction that the spread of Christianity should no longer be left solely to Roman Catholicism.⁴⁹ "His efforts centered about one book, the Bible, and about one main form of organization the collegia pietatis (pietistic society)."⁵⁰ The work of Spener concentrated on catechetical instruction, as he gathered groups into his home for the cultivation of the Christian life "through the discussion of the Sunday sermons, prayer, and the study of the Bible."⁵¹ It was this

⁴⁹Latourette, A History of the Expansion, III, 46.

⁵⁰Arthur W. Nagler, Pietism and Methodism (Nashville: M.E. Church, South, 1918), p. 47.

⁵¹Kenneth Scott Latourette, A History of Christianity (New York: Harper & Row, 1975), II, 895.

grouping of individuals for study and discussion which gave rise to the title "pietistic society."

Through the pietistic societies, Spener was desirous of reforming the Lutheran Church-- morally and spiritually. It was his opinion that the lives of the clergy, as well as the laity, were unworthy; and he recommended that the Church support the society concept by forming "ecclesiolae (little churches) of those who were in earnest about their souls' salvation."⁵² Among the clergy these groups were established wherever possible, and served as leaven, slowly and thoroughly spreading throughout the whole Church. These little Churches however also contained lay persons, who also felt the need to be saved. Essential to Spener's movement was the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. Among the laity the movement sought to wipe out immorality and drunkenness; and with the clergy it attempted to breakdown the formalism and sterility which tended to characterize the worship services of the Lutheran Church of the period.

The stress of Spener's movement was "genuine conversion and the cultivation of the Christian life."⁵³ Much emphasis was placed on the notion of new birth and the doctrine of perfection. Therefore, the movement discounted

⁵²Nagler,, Pietism and Methodism, 50.

⁵³Latourette, A History of Christianity, II, 895.

all preaching which was doctrinal in favor of preaching which facilitated "a personal, warm, Christian experience and the cultivation of Christian virtues."⁵⁴ Thus, to make possible the Christian experience and the cultivation of true Christian virtues, the societies-- the ecclesiolae in ecclesia-- read the Scriptures and mutually assisted members in spiritual growth. The societies rested upon a strong sense of inculcated self-discipline and abstinence.

Philip Jacob Spener, often called the founder of Pietism began his ministry with preaching and teaching; and then extended it through the organization of societies and the writing of the Pia Desideria (in 1675). In his evangelistic activities we can find the addition of a conscious and planned attempt to organize converts-- an added factor which was missing in the evangelistic models of the first century. This trend toward the development of societies grew out of Spener's concern for the renewal and revival of the mainline Lutheran Church within Germany and his doctrinal position, which has been summarized as follows:

Over against orthodoxy he emphasized sanctification rather than justification, communion with God rather than reconciliation with him, Christ in us rather than Christ for us. ⁵⁵

At the same time he was concerned about education for

⁵⁴Latourette, A History of Christianity, II, 895.

⁵⁵Nagler, p. 42.

children, social and political progress, and international missions and evangelism. All of these concerns and interests led Spener to gather the "serious-minded" Christians into groups for the purpose of effecting and affecting the whole life of German Protestantism, so as to return the Church to the basic ideals and principles which had brought it into being centuries ago. It was Spener's preaching, teaching, writing and organizing which made him "instrumental in keeping the missionary ideals before the Church and to that extent helped to lay the foundation upon which future efforts might be built."⁵⁶

Before leaving Pietism and turning to the Evangelical movement and its Methodist spin-off, let us look briefly at the successor to Philip Spener, August Hermann Francke and his organizational activities. Halle, the Pietistic center at the turn of the eighteenth century, is where Francke began the work which prevented Pietism from becoming a separatist movement and precluded its drifting into mystical radicalism.⁵⁷ Placing a great deal of weight upon the concept of "Buszkampf" (penitential struggle), Francke organized his form of Pietism; a pietism in which the "conversion experience" was essential.⁵⁸ The important aspects of

⁵⁶Nagler, p. 56.

⁵⁷Latourette, A History of The Expansion, III, 46.

⁵⁸Nagler, p. 57.

this experience were "the two contrasting states, despair and doubt on the one hand, assurance and joy on the other, and a sudden transition from one to the other."⁵⁹ In the mind of Francke, this struggle and transition was the genesis of the true Christian existence; for he was strongly influenced by the doctrine of natural and total human depravity. The true Christian must hate sin and clearly see its awfulness, as well as hunger after God. Only the "broken and contrite" heart was fit to receive the Gospel. Francke believed that salvation was always extremely near, and that pure and simple faith in Jesus Christ the Redeemer was necessary for obtaining it; but only the one experiencing the "buszkampf" was capable of having true faith in Christ and a sense of sin. Out of the "conversion experience" came the denial of the world coupled with an active, permanent love for God, which expressed itself in righteousness and the submission to suffering.⁶⁰

Important for our study was the motivating factor of Francke's activities: his belief that there was a radical difference between the converted and unconverted individual. In fact, for Francke the unconverted person could not be called a Christian in the true sense of the word.⁶¹ Thus,

⁵⁹Nagler, p. 59.

⁶⁰Ibid., p. 61.

⁶¹Ibid.

he preached and used theology in order to convert, while organizing meetings, collegia and other services in order to strengthen those who had experienced conversion. The greatness of Francke's movement resides in his ability to make Pietism practical through the organization of homes and institutions for children and adults.

Francke's evangelistic activity operated on five distinct levels. First, he preached with great effect throughout the region of Glaucha. In his preaching one can find heavy emphasis upon "the preparation for conversion" through the "testing of the heart affections and recognizing the utter depravity of the soul:" and unity with God, so that God lives within the person.⁶² Second, he introduced systematic pastoral visitations. In these visitations Francke met with the entire family, examining them on the faith and exhorting them to practice. The visitation generally ended with prayer. Third, he introduced prayer services where "prayer alternated with song, Scripture reading and interpretation, and examination in the catechism."⁶³ Fourth, the congregation received additional training by reading Francke's works. Finally, he instituted an orphan home and schools for the students, in which theology was

⁶²Ibid.

⁶³Ibid., p. 63.

taught.⁶⁴

By the turn of the eighteenth century, the Pietist movement was sending out evangelists and missionaries for work all around the world, including the East Indies under the direction of the King of Denmark; and at the same time was influencing the other German movements. The most "extensive of all the missionary movements in which Pietism was a major factor was that which bears the name Moravian..."⁶⁵ Like the Pietist movement of Philip Spener, the Moravians sought only to have a leavening or transforming influence throughout the Christian communion. "It was through the Moravians that in 1738 John Wesley entered into the religious experience which proved decisive in bringing Methodism into being."⁶⁶ In the Wesleyan Methodism the Pietists and Moravians had their most extensive productivity.

Methodism has its roots in the evangelical revival of the eighteenth century. The evangelical revival aimed primarily at the renewal of the spiritual religion within the Church of England and resembled Pietism in that it contended for the immediate and particular influence of the Holy Spirit. Its central doctrines were: the total

⁶⁴Ibid.

⁶⁵Latourette, A History of the Expansion, III, 47.

⁶⁶Ibid., III, 48.

depravity of the person; the vicarious nature of the Atonement worked by Christ on Calvary; the absolute sinfulness of certain kinds of amusement; the strict following of the regulations for the Sabbath; and the remaining with the Church of England.⁶⁷ Methodism can be distinguished from Evangelicalism by the fact that the majority of its converts were drawn from the lower and lower-middle classes of England's cities, while Evangelicalism took its members from the upper and upper-middle classes; Methodism featured elaborate organizational forms; and it functioned through a "system of itinerancy."⁶⁸

Like the pietistic movement which preceded it, the evangelical revival was a response to the social realities of its time: (1) the general lack of spirituality which was plaguing the membership of the Church of England; and (2) the deplorable conditions created by the Industrial Revolution. The Methodist movement attempted to remedy many of the illnesses which were present in the cities of England during the early years of the Revolution. Speaking of the Methodist movement Green writes:

The noblest result of the Methodist revival was the steady attempt... to remedy the guilt, the ignorance,

⁶⁷J.H. Overton, The Evangelical Revival In the Eighteenth Century (London: Longmans, Green, 1886), p. 44-45.

⁶⁸*Ibid.*, p. 52.

the physical suffering, the social degradation of the profligate and the poor... It produced a new philanthropy which reformed our prisons, infused clemency and wisdom into our penal laws, abolished the slave trade, and gave the first impulse to popular education. 69

Evangelistic activities of this period, then, were the response to both the spiritual and physical needs of the people. The work of calling persons to Christ and strengthening them in the community of faith, took place over and around significant worldly concerns and issues.

The main question, however, is: What was the evangelistic understanding and technique which characterized the Wesleyan revival? Before answering this question, it is important to emphasize that the Methodist movement began small, grew swiftly, had a mass impact, and held a permanent effect upon persons and institutions.⁷⁰ These are facts which must be borne in mind as one seeks to understand the Methodist movement in proper perspective.

The evangelistic method employed by John Wesley, himself, was flexible and even seems to have developed from "special exigencies rather than to have been elaborated as a whole."⁷¹ However, at the core of all he did was his

⁶⁹Quoted by Francis Gerald Ensley, John Wesley: Evangelist (Nashville: Methodist Pub. House, 1958), p. 9.

⁷⁰Ibid., p. 11. John Wesley himself did not expect his movement to last more than thirty years. However, even today the Methodist Church is the third largest Protestant Denomination in the world.

⁷¹Overton, p. 53.

devotion to an ideal: "Salvation of all of man and all men for all time."⁷² Salvation for John Wesley was: "salvation of the mind, redemption from rudeness and lack of knowledge to culture;" and "salvation of the body."⁷³ Every person should be wholly redeemed, i.e., living the "complete religious life," which is demonstrated by faith, works and participation in the Church.⁷⁴ It was this ideal which motivated the evangelistic activity of John Wesley: the desire to see all persons with the love of God in their hearts, and experiencing salvation. His work can be divided into two broad categories of activity: (1) extension, taking the Gospel to the people where they lived and moved; and (2) intension, conserving the successes through the development of the means for consolidation. Let us look briefly at each of these aspects of John Wesley's work.

In order to extend or spread the Gospel John Wesley practiced and perfected the art of "field-preaching;" i.e., the publishing of the Gospel under the sun.⁷⁵ In fact, it is recorded that the founder of the Methodist movement felt it something of a sin for a preacher to remain cooped up in a room when the masses were out in the streets of the city or

⁷²Ensley, p. 36.

⁷³Ibid., p. 31.

⁷⁴Ibid., p. 26.

⁷⁵Ibid., p. 40.

at the market places. Through his sermons Wesley sought to: (1) invite the listeners to pay attention to his message, by creating a "sense of need"; (2) convince the hearers of the truth of the gospel by using a tight logical presentation; (3) offer Christ as the answer to the plight of all persons, by presenting Christ as the Savior for persons who are unrighteous; and (4) build up the congregation by presenting the beauty of the saved life.⁷⁶ In all instances the preaching of Wesley was edifying and positive: he never spent much time preaching hell-fire or the terror of the day of the Lord. Around the sermon Wesley utilized congregational singing "to draw his crowd, create the mood, and reinforce his message."⁷⁷ This then is how John Wesley sought to extend the kingdom of God.

In order to consolidate his successes, John Wesley first reconstituted the old society concept. He established the societies to bring together in "a holy bond his newly awakened disciples."⁷⁸ These societies were first organized within the Church of England so as to help and strengthen the spirituality and morally weakened Church. The society was the first point of entrance for an individual who demonstrated the concern for the truly religious life.

⁷⁶Ibid., p. 42f.

⁷⁷Ibid.

⁷⁸Overton, p. 53.

All Methodists within a given community were members of a society. The society met regularly for "preaching services, testimony meetings, love feasts," but the Methodists were still mandated to attend the Church of England and to follow its ordinances.⁷⁹

The next stage, as one progressed within the Methodist system, was the Class. The class-meeting appears to have emerged simply from the "necessity of finding money to pay for what Wesley himself would have called a 'preaching-house' in Bristol."⁸⁰ In the early stage of the class, someone was to go around and collect an offering from eleven of his neighbors on a weekly basis, and then to make up the difference needed for the quota out of his own pocket. Then, Wesley assembled the leaders of this class system and charged them to minister to the needs and regulate the conduct of those visited-- as well as receive the pence. Subsequently, the leaders began to gather the class into a room to examine their souls. As time progressed, the class meeting became an essential part of the Methodist evangelistic method; for as soon as a person demonstrated that he or she had experienced justification, that person was assigned to a class within the larger society. To be a member of a class was an indication that one had truly

⁷⁹Ensley, p. 47.

⁸⁰Overton, p. 54.

entered upon the Christian style of living.

Persons who desired more intimate Christian fellowship were allowed into band meetings. These groups formed the nucleus of the Methodist fellowship. The band, or little company, was comprised of persons with "like minds," who desired in the words of Wesley: "to pour out their hearts without reserve, particularly with regard to the sin which did still easily beset them, and the temptations which were most apt to prevail over them; and they were desirous of this when they observed it was the express advice of an inspired writer (James v. 16)."⁸¹ These bands were not electives, but were required as a part of one's continued religious nurture.

To complement this three-level structure, there grew up within the Methodist system three characteristic forms of worship. The first service was the love feast. John Wesley described the celebration in this way:

In order to increase in them a grateful sense of all the mercies of the Lord, I desired that one evening in a quarter they should all come together, that we might eat bread (as the ancient Christians did) with gladness and with singleness of heart. At these love Feasts--so we termed them, retaining the name as well as the thing, which was in use from the beginning, Jude xii--our food is only a little plain cake and water; but we seldom return from them without being fed, not only with the meat that perisheth, but with that which endureth to everlasting life. ⁸²

⁸¹Ibid., p. 56

⁸²Quoted from John Wesley, in Ibid., p. 55.

The second service was the Watchnight. This meeting was initially held on the Friday of each month closest to the full moon. At these services the congregation spent the evening "in prayer and praise and thanksgiving..."⁸³ The third service was the Covenant service. This service was held on the first Sunday of the year for all Methodists. At this time every Methodist was invited to participate in a "collective covenant pledging devotion to God with heart and soul."⁸⁴ The service began with Charles Wesley's hymn:

Come, let us use the grace divine
And all with one accord,
In a perpetual covenant join
Ourselves to Christ the Lord;

and ended with every member placing his or her possessions and life at the disposal of Christ.

This then is an overview of the evangelistic methods of the Pietist and Methodist movements of the early and late eighteenth century. Of course, much more could be written about both movements. However, it should be clear that Pietism and Methodism are similar in that they began as revival movements within the Protestant Church, as the leaders perceived the need to renew the moral, physical and spiritual lives of Christians and non-Christians.

⁸³Ibid., p. 56.

⁸⁴Ensley, p. 50.

Their goals were not merely to bring their own disciples to Christ, but to bring the whole Church and community back to Christ. They believed this could be done as one took the Gospel to persons where they were and lived; and then disciplined the individual converts through participation in new kinds of societies-- societies which were in unique ways the nurturing and caring Church, the visible expression of the Kingdom of God. Finally, both movements had a widespread and lasting effect upon their churches and the world as a whole, as they generated a new spirit and enthusiasm for the Gospel and the life in Christ.

Nineteenth Century

As we turn to the nineteenth century it is possible to look at evangelistic activities as they emerged in the black church in America. Throughout the eighteenth century the evangelistic activities among American black slaves were conducted almost exclusively by white Baptists and Methodists. The activities of these Protestant denominations took the form of "preaching and pastoral visiting in the homes," with special attention being given to catechizing the children.⁸⁵ However, by the end of the eighteenth century, due to the loosening of the slave codes and the growing numbers of free blacks, blacks began to evangelize

⁸⁵Wade D. Barclay, History of Methodist Missions (New York: Methodist Church, 1949), I, 270.

among themselves. One of the earliest formal evangelistic efforts was led and conducted by Richard Allen through the Free African Society, which later became the African Methodist Episcopal Church founded in 1816. In the Free African Society evangelism was primarily done through preaching, the Church school and a day and night school.⁸⁶ Later as the all black Church began to grow and expand, it became the task of every preacher to develop definite educational societies within his charges.⁸⁷

As the nineteenth century progressed and black religious movements became more prominent, white evangelists began to experience increased difficulty in evangelizing among blacks. The major reason for this difficulty "lies mainly in the inability" of the slaves and former slaves "to reconcile the faith of the evangelizers with their conduct."⁸⁸ Needless to say, the one million blacks who were Christians by the turn of the nineteenth century held desires and dreams quite different and distinct from those entertained and proclaimed by white evangelists-- and these desires and dreams permeated the whole community. The primary goal among blacks had come to be freedom, i.e.,

⁸⁶J. Beverly F. Shaw, The Negro In the History of Methodism (Nashville: Parthenon Press, 1954), p. 34.

⁸⁷Ibid., p. 42.

⁸⁸Lawrence A. Jones, "The Sought a City," in C. Eric Lincoln (ed.) The Black Experience In Religion (Garden City: Anchor Press, 1974), p. 9.

freedom understood in terms of the biblical concept of the "New Jerusalem." The faith of black slaves rested firmly in the God who was the liberator and who had promised a new heaven and a new earth:

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband; and I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling of God is with men. He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself will be with them; and will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more, for the former things have passed away."
(Rev. xxi. 1-4)

The slave community had come to worship the God who made "all things new," who led His children on the "Exodus" while the white evangelists denied this God with their conduct and with most of their proclamation.

Therefore, the later decades of the nineteenth century are marked by blacks "moving to assume some measure of responsibility for the quality of life" and the type of evangelism available to their fellows.⁸⁹ The organized activities of black Christians in this period had a "twin purpose:" (1) to make available to members of the community the "truth of the Gospel:" and (2) to conduct "ministries of benevolence and self help."⁹⁰

⁸⁹Ibid.

⁹⁰Ibid.

These activities were necessary because they were virtually neglected by the churches, insofar as evangelism was concerned, and because the structures of society ignored the physical needs and human rights of the disprivileged freedmen in their midst. 91

Where black churches did not yet exist, Mutual Aid Societies were founded by black Christians. These societies grew out of a deep evangelical commitment and the perception that all persons were called to preach the Good News. At the same time these societies were organized to meet the earthly needs of the poor and recently freed slaves. These societies also served as "an alternative to the pulpits of the religious establishment to which blacks were denied fully accredited access."⁹²

After the Civil War the African Methodist Episcopal Church and many black Baptist Churches had begun to stabilize. These Churches began to develop evangelistic tools like magazines, institutions of learning, societies and associations for men and women, and colleges and universities in order to minister to the social as well as physical needs of their people.⁹³ As black Christians lived out the meaning of being the Church in the nineteenth century they saw as their task: (1) the freeing of souls from the wages

⁹¹Ibid., p. 10.

⁹²Ibid.

⁹³Shaw, p. 51f.

of sin and death, and "bodies from physical, political, and social bondage;" and (2) "setting the conditions of existence so that blacks could achieve their full humanity."⁹⁴

If we are to look specifically at the most important factor in the evangelistic activities of the black Church during the period in question, then we must concentrate upon the preacher. Among the slaves and, later, the newly freed blacks, it was the preacher who played the important role in the expansion and development of the black Church in America. It was the preacher, the community leader, through his "personal qualities," who spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ and extended the kingdom of God among the people.⁹⁵ During this time it was primarily the black preacher who possessed a knowledge of the Bible and who, through his ability to speak and preach, spread the Gospel. Also important to the spread of the Gospel and the development of the Church was the preacher's ability to sing the Spirituals and tell the stories of God's saving relationship with His children.

As the black Church in America emerged from the category of an invisible institution to a visible and permanent entity in the life of the black community, it was

⁹⁴Jones, p. 13.

⁹⁵E. Franklin Frazier, The Negro Church In America (New York: Schocken, 1966), p. 17.

still the black preacher who played the crucial role in the evangelistic activities of the institution. In the areas of economic development, civil rights, or education it was the clergy person who was the leader in the effort to secure for persons a better quality of life. In the fight for better education, the clergy was compelled to lead in the struggle as a part of bringing the Gospel to the heathen in the new world; and so, Church School and then formal schools were established through the work of the preacher and his congregation.⁹⁶ In the political arena, especially subsequent to the Civil War and during the Reconstruction, it was Methodist and Baptist preachers who led the fight for expanded civil liberties for black people.⁹⁷

It is clear that nineteenth-century evangelism, as practiced by the black Church, was successful to the extent that the preacher exhibited the kind of personal conduct that matched the faith proclaimed by the Church; and to the extent that his evangelistic program, as preacher and leader, centered on persons and was geared to meet the specific needs of persons within the broader community. In this period the Father of Jesus Christ was the God who led His children to freedom through release from

⁹⁶Carter G. Woodson, The Education of the Negro Prior to 1861 (New York: Arno, 1968), p. 18.

⁹⁷Frazier, p. 42ff.

economic, educational, political and spiritual bondage. The Church was expected to develop institutions and societies which extended the possibility for a new kind of relationship between God and the individual, and between the individual and the neighbor.

Twentieth Century

The central issue influencing the evangelistic activities from the black Church perspective since the end of the nineteenth century has been the city-- its growth and problems.⁹⁸ Within the black Church in United Methodism, evangelistic activities with the cities have hit a point of retrenchment during the last decades of the twentieth century. This retrenchment is obvious when one recognizes that the Church all through the major cities has turned in upon itself, focusing primarily upon the Sunday morning worship service and the sermon which gives to this service its apparent credibility. This retrenchment is also obvious when one acknowledges the recent decline of educational and teaching activities, and missions programs operative among urban Churches. Except for a few isolated examples in each Jurisdiction, black United Methodist Churches have

⁹⁸Roger S. Greenway, Calling Our Cities to Christ (Nutley, N.J.: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1973), p. 9.

ceased to be the means through which God reconciles the world (and the city in particular) to Himself through Jesus Christ; and members of these Churches no longer see themselves as personal witnesses for God in the middle of troubled communities, experiencing anxious times. In short the black Church is no longer evangelizing the city, but waiting for the city to come to its services in order to hear and receive the Good News.

However, in this period there are some vital evangelistic models which can be studied-- both in and out of the United Methodist Church. Early in the century there was the work of John R. Mott, who was an evangelist throughout America, Africa, Asia and Europe; and the work of Sherwood Eddy, who was an important evangelist in this nation. In the black Church within Methodism there are some important, although less renown, examples of evangelism at its best. Such models exist with the key churches of the Eastern, Southern, North Central and Western Jurisdictions-- if one cares to look-- and these churches have emerged as leading community institutions in the last two decades. These are churches which have refused to allow the tenor of today's modern, technological world to force them into turning in upon themselves; and they are institutions which have continued to forcibly and vigorously pursue the dream of the New Jerusalem in the middle of major cities where justice and liberty remain

important values and issues for individuals and communities suffering under structural oppression. What are the evangelistic activities that these churches exhibit?

First, and most important, these churches exhibit a genuine concern for the Gospel and its implications for the poor and disinherited at their door step. Thus, they work to foster an experience of the Church prior to one's entering the Church as a member of the institution. They strive to give the community an experience of the Church's support by rightly providing moral and spiritual guidance, before expecting persons to support the Church.⁹⁹ The Church program reaches into the community through a variety of auxiliary organizations including youth organizations, societies and associations for adults, recreational facilities, credit unions, housing projects, day care centers, schools and training centers, and referral agencies. In this way these churches affirm the obligation of the Church to those who are victims of twentieth century urban society; and proclaim at the same time the Good News of Jesus Christ.¹⁰⁰

Second, these churches conduct living, vital worship experiences, where preaching is highlighted and the choir sings the Spirituals and Gospels, as well as anthems. These

⁹⁹Norris S. Curry, Theoretical and Practical Views of Spirit, Laws, and Discipline Evangelistically Understood In the Methodist Way (Los Angeles: Methodist Church, 1976), p. 16

¹⁰⁰Greenway, p. 95.

churches also conduct regular Bible studies, prayer group meetings and emphasize the Church School program. Worship and devotional activities, as well as Christian education programs play an important and central role in their overall, institutional lives.

Third, the membership frequently participates in family-related programs and in personal witness and evangelism activities through canvassing and visiting the homes, hospitals and prisons in the community. In these churches evangelism is viewed as every member's responsibility and duty.

In the preceding pages we have sketched the evangelistic models and understandings of key Christian movements across twenty centuries. At the opening of this chapter the question of the difference between Christian evangelism and crude proselytizing was raised. Throughout these pages our aim has been to surface the differences by lifting up the positive elements of evangelism; and at this time we can summarize and answer this important question by simply delineating these positive elements. First, evangelism is motivated by the demand of the Gospel for a new order, a new order believed to be at the heart of the faith, and one that judges the old or contemporary world order. In the Matthean community this motivation can be seen in the struggle between the old, Jewish order and the new, messianic order, with its eschatological foundation. The evangelistic

activity of the Francke movement demonstrates this factor in the demand that the person be united with God which called the Church to a new level of spirituality. Turning to the Wesley movement, the motivation is evident in Wesley's desire to save lower-class persons from mental, cultural and bodily destruction, a destruction which was the prevalent consequence of the Industrial Revolution. In the black Church this is again seen in the struggle for a New Jerusalem and a community founded on the "truth of the Gospel." Second, evangelism is comprised of preaching the word of God, His good news, to the victims of the old order. The heart of this word is faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, the need for repentance, and the call to reject the old order for a new order, i.e., participation in the Church. Third, evangelism is instruction on the moral and ethical principles upon which the Christian must live. This instruction is generally formulated on the basis of conditions in the Church and world at a given time in history. Fourth, evangelism is organization for the purpose of nurturing and caring for those who come to the faith and who are in need. This evangelistic element is essential because it permits persons to grow in the faith as they participate in societies and groups for prayer, continued study, mutual aid and ministry to the world.

This concludes our historical and theological study

of evangelism at important points in the past twenty centuries. With this understanding and foundation, let us now turn to use the techniques suggested in order to prescribe an evangelistic model appropriate for the black United Methodist Church in transitional communities over the next decade or two.

Chapter 3

AN EVANGELISTIC MODEL FOR THE TRANSITIONAL CHURCH

Introduction

In the preceding chapter we uncovered and explored some of the more important historical, theological and technical elements which must serve as a foundation in the development of a contemporary model of evangelism in the United Methodist Church. Our endeavor in this chapter will be to construct an evangelistic model on the basis of the elements described above for doing evangelism in this decade. This model, with its inherent method, will be: contiguous with the models outlined above; focusing on the spiritual and practical needs of the black United Methodist Church in local communities; and addressing the needs of the black community. In the process of proposing this model we will suggest how it relates to the United Methodist Church structure and conclude with an analysis and review of the model in the light of categories presented in systems theory. This will hopefully permit us to suggest how evangelism can serve as an organizing and developing instrument within the local church. Before discussing this model, let us restate the meaning of evangelism and systems theory for this work.

The models explored in the last chapter vividly demonstrate that evangelism is a threefold programmatic

occurrence or happening: (1) the bringing of persons into a vital and living relationship with God and neighbor through faith in Jesus Christ; (2) the experiencing of salvation through faith, an understanding of the social implications of the Good News, and a maturing personality rooted in Christ's image; and (3) the striving to bring persons into the kingdom of God, the communion of the Church, and the service of reconciliation. The models emerging from the Early Church, Pietist and Methodist movements make it abundantly clear that evangelistic models can be seen as systems; i.e., activities and events with interdependent parts making a whole which supercedes the sum of its parts with respect to efficiency and productivity in the evangelistic task, a process which is dependent upon human and material input and output, and an entity which needs goals, planning and management in order to reach maximum efficiency.

In order for an effective, efficient evangelistic model to be developed in the ethnic minority local church in transition, one must understand the realities of the community and church situation. The transitional church is the product of a transitional community. A community in transition is a geographical area into which a new ethnic group has recently moved (gradually or rapidly within the past 15-20 years) and presently comprises less than 50% of the community's population. Once the 50% mark is reached

the community becomes a post-transitional enclave.¹ The transitional and post-transitional community are marked by distinct sets of emotional and psychological, as well as organizational and social circumstances; but those of the post-transitional community are to be considered here.

On the emotional and psychological level, the post-transitional community is marked by high levels of stress, feelings of frustration and powerlessness, and conflict between individual members and groups within its boundaries. These feelings and the accompanying conflict are accentuated by the exploitation which is conducted by absentee landlords, business concerns and governmental agencies within the area. The organizational and social life of the community are weakened by poor and inadequate leadership from both the clergy and lay ranks. Beset by rising crime, property deterioration and devaluation, red lining and the withdrawal of business enterprises, and decreasing standards of education, the leadership of the community (if there is any) finds itself incapable of establishing clear community-wide goals, objectives, and strategies; and unable to secure the money to fund such

¹"The Church in Transition: From Abandonment to Mission," A Summary of the Church In Transition Training conducted in Nashville, 1972. (Nashville: Association for Christian Training and Service), p. 2ff.

programs if they could be formulated.² Complicating the problems of the post-transitional community is the fact of widespread unemployment due to increased technology and the migration of business away from the city. This unemployment is extremely high especially among the young. There is also incidences of welfare and single parent families. This tends to create a community which is soon locked into the hard core unemployable syndrome, highly unstable and rapidly declining into a slum.

Prior to this stage is that period which can be called the transitional phase in the community's history. During this period the middle class of the particular ethnic minority group soon to inherit the community moves into the neighborhood in small numbers. This group represents the ethnic minority group's new bourgeoisie. Its values, its class, its educational level, tend to match those of the white folk now dwelling in the community. It is this group of persons, who exhibit relatively stable family structures, hold good jobs and possess values quite dissimilar from those of the lower class, that come to live in the shifting community during the middle and late years of transition and who sell out, along with the whites, to those who make up the post-transitional community.

²Daniel E. Bonner, Jr., The United Methodist Church In Transitional Communities (New York: Methodist Board of Global Ministries, 1976), p. 8ff.

Thus, it is possible to see that transition is both a socio-economic and a racial turn over of the community. Therefore, the transitional church, if it is to serve in this kind of community must recognize and prepare for doing evangelism, first to a new community which is racially different and at times heterogeneous; and, then, to a newer community which is economically, racially and socially changing to become much more homogeneous.

As the community experiences this shift, a parallel set of conditions emerge within the local church itself. The church begins to change from an all-white to a mixed congregation of whites and minorities. The rapidity of change in the community, coupled with the numbers of minorities joining the church, determine how long the majority white situation will last within the congregation. However, sooner or later the white church will die.³ This traditionally has left a small congregation of minority members, generally middle class in mind set, struggling to maintain the Christian witness to this different community. These persons possess little or no technical know how for carrying on the whole church program, primarily because they have been excluded from formal leadership roles during the early

³Robert L. Wilson and James H. Davis, The Church in The Racially Changing Community (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1966), p. 82.

white tenure in the congregation; and they are generally without the financial base needed to carry on the church program as it had existed in that neighborhood. This gives rise to a deep sense of inadequacy among the leaders of this new minority church. At the same time, they feel hopelessly cut off from the world and unable or unwilling to reach the lower class members of their race now taking over the community-- and these persons are needed to create a new vital local church. As time progresses, it becomes increasingly more difficult to gain new members from the neighborhood, as the persons moving in soon come to identify the church as a "white church" or as an upper class church disinterested in the hopes and needs of the new community.

All across the church, in atmospheres such as this, black and ethnic minority churches struggle for survival and revival. The massiveness of the problem is clear, but becomes all the more impressive when three additional factors are considered. The first additional factor is that of the antiquated and large buildings in which most transitional churches are found. Many of these buildings are over 50 years old and in need of extensive repairs and renovation. The other additional factor, and one which is much more insidious, is that many of the new members of the church are unaware of what it means to be Methodist. The Methodist traditions and structures are unknown to the new

members; and therefore, they feel tied into a massive system which takes from but does not support them, and they soon come to believe they can not impact this system with their needs and frustrations so as to gain access to the immense resources of the structure. The third factor is that of pastoral leadership. In most cases older pastors are appointed to such congregations. These pastors are generally close to retirement. Instead of maximizing the chance for new life and growth, such appointments tend to increase the possibilities for opposite results. If we are desirous of developing strong churches for tomorrow, then we do well to recall:

The strong church of tomorrow will be led by a pastor who has been effective in his or her earlier ministry and is challenged by the opportunities presented by a new congregation. The pastor will also be a person who brings stability to the congregation instead of relying upon it for strength.⁴

Pastors in the early years, just out of seminary and committed to the local church ought to be appointed to transitional churches and allowed to develop such churches with the help of the district, conference and national church agencies.

With this overview of the community and inner-church environments, with the factors which contribute to the phenomenon we call the transitional church, let us turn to

⁴Ezra Earl Jones, Strategies for New Churches (New York: Harper & Row, 1976), p. 15.

propose an evangelistic model. It should be noted that any church deciding to use the following, or any other, model should begin by studying and analyzing the ambience of its own local church and community; for the results of this study will play a determining role in the content and organization of one's model. The local church choosing to become involved in the survival and revival of the transitional church must first come to grips with the inner city and second have definitely come to grips with its role in that city. The transitional church can not shrink back from the words of the prophet Jeremiah:

"Thus says the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat their produce. Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons and give your daughters in marriage, that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply there, and do not decrease. But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.

Jeremiah xxix. 4-7

The Church experiencing change must take these words of the Lord to His chosen people to heart, and allow them to shape the church's evangelistic activities during the next decades.

An Evangelistic Model for the Late 1970s

As an introduction to this section of the work, it must be stated that the following model is person centered in the sense that it takes seriously the concept of the

"sacramental person."⁵ Essential to the evangelistic model to be proposed is the pastor of the local church in question. On the basis of the early church model, it is the Apostle, the disciple, in communion with and representing the living Lord, who is the Word, the Good News; and it is this person who serves as the source of and impetus for all evangelistic activities. Also important to this model is the idea that the whole church must be evangelistic, i.e., that evangelism is not a part of or a work area within the church's structure or overall program but that it is the local church's whole program and its reason for being and acting in the community. If the transitional church is to be the Church, then its pastor must become an Apostle; and the congregation must decide at the earliest possible point to be an evangelistic center-- a risking, giving, sacrificing community-- in the life of its changing neighborhood. To do otherwise will mean that the end of that local church's witness to the world is near.

The motivation for proposing and developing a new model of evangelism for the transitional community should by this point be quite clear. The Church is established to be a witness of Jesus Christ until the end of the age, or until his coming again. The admonition of our Lord to

⁵Urban T. Holmes, The Future Shape of Ministry (New York: Seabury Press, 1971), p. 8ff.

herald the kingdom of God has not changed in the years since his death and resurrection. This remains an essential and important task of the Church-- and especially of the local church in the transitional situation.

The question to be raised at this stage is: what should be the motivating assumption of the local church once it finds itself in the transitional situation? Or to put the question in another way, what is the self-understanding to be adopted by the transitional church? The answer to this question will determine the local church's "ideation: the belief, concept, or idea from which the social institution germinates."⁶ The answer can be derived from a synthesis of the church concepts prescribed by two twentieth century theologians: Karl Barth and Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

First and foremost, the local church must see itself as the herald. Thus, its basic conceptualization of self is that of the People of God created to evangelize by sharing "with others who have not 'heard' of Christ the things God has shown to us in His revelation by grace."⁷ The decisive factor in this view is grace: God's good will and favor, which gathers together the congregation "by the word-- a word that ceaselessly summons it to repentance and

⁶Ezra Earl Jones, "Rationale, Questions and Assumptions," in Ezra Earl Jones (ed.) New Church Development In The Eighties (New York: United Methodist Church, 1976), p.7.

⁷Pieter De Jong, Evangelism and Contemporary Theology (Nashville: Tidings, 1962), p. 83.

reform."⁸ In this concept the church points away from itself like John the Baptist who points to the Lamb of God and prepares the way for the coming of the Christ. The church in the transitional community must place heavy emphasis on faith in Jesus Christ, as the Word of God, and in the nearness of the kingdom.

Coupled with this Barthian perspective on the Church as herald must be the concept of the church as outlined in the theology of Dietrich Bonhoeffer. In the changing environment of the neighborhood which is rapidly moving from white to black or from middle class to lower class, it is the role of the Church to share in the area's "sense of abandonment;" to stand along side the people of the area; and to help them view their present situation "from the perspective of faith."⁹ This is the concept of the church based on its obedience and sacrifice, and the need for the Church to strive for complete solidarity with the people of the community:

Evangelism should never have a forced character or be done out of fear. We will act out of fear if our own 'religion' is based on fear... The best kind of witness ... is standing in solidarity with other people... and accepting them as Christ accepted them. ¹⁰

⁸Avery Dullus, Models of the Church (Garden City: Doubleday, 1974), p. 72.

⁹De Jong, p. 42.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 46.

The Christian is not a person who merely talks of God, but is the individual who participates in Christ's life, death, and resurrection in the here and now; and who stands "by God in His suffering with the world."¹¹ If this is the duty of the individual Christian, then it is also the task of the Church; for "a church may not be corporately less Christian than the individual Christian."¹² The local church in the transitional community must plunge itself into the life of the godless neighborhood, giving up all of its pretensions, taking life as it comes, always living in the "perspective of the resurrection." By its life style of solidarity and openness to God's future the church is the vessel through which repentance and conversion are possible; for in this way the church demonstrates to men and women the meaning of living in this world on the basis of faith. Thus, the local church helps men and women take life in stride, with all of its responsibilities and pains, its joys and sorrows, its experiences and helplessness, by directing them to the point where they can throw themselves utterly in the arms of the Lord and take part in his suffering in the community. In the transitional community the church must diligently strive to demonstrate true fellowship being lived

¹¹Ibid., p. 48.

¹²H.R.L. Sheppard, The Impatience of a Parson (Garden City: Doubleday, Doran, 1928), p. 100.

out in the midst of a changing, and at times devastating, situation. On the basis of this view, the church in the transitional community must place heavy emphasis upon ways and means to interpret Christ to all in all kinds of settings without "worrying about the lack of religiosity because religiosity is perhaps not at all such a favorable condition for accepting Christ."¹³ The Transitional church must proclaim in being and acting:

Blessed are those who are not filled to such an extent with the accomplishments of their own spirit and the pride about achievements of their own mind that no place is left for the Spirit of God. ¹⁴

The evangelistic model coming from the synthesis of a church concept which emphasizes the ways and means of interpreting Christ, and a concept which stresses faith in Jesus Christ as the Word and in the nearness of the kingdom must accent: (1) activities which declare to the community the comfort and exhortation of God's yes-- the "yes" that is His love and salvation forcibly, impressively and universally active in the now;¹⁵ and (2) activities "born out of a relationship where one has truly listened, served and borne the needs of others."¹⁶ This means that for this

¹³De Jong, p. 42.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Karl Barth, Church Dogmatics (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), I, 68.

¹⁶Dallas M. Roark, Dietrich Bonhoeffer (Waco, Tx: Word Books, 1976), p. 70

age and especially for the transitional community, the Church, as it strives to be evangelistic, must mediate salvation; i.e., it must proclaim and flesh out in the unstable and abandoned community the meaning of the salvation proclaimed by Jesus, and it must be opening the way for Christ's second coming in a process of active preparation which transforms the community while preparing for the outburst of God's full glory.¹⁷ The evangelistic efforts of the church in the transitional community must carry out and make real the proclamation of God's free offer of salvation-- the ideas of liberation, justice and love. At the bottom line, evangelism in the transitional community is making possible individual and social liberation from all that is oppressive and judged to be sin; and liberation for the creation of a new community.

In the coming decades, and in the changing urban scene, the church must be a herald to and stand with its communities. This is the ideation, the belief or concept, from which the local church's structure as a social institution germinates. The structure for conducting evangelistic activities in the transitional community must be based on the idea that the church mediates salvation: i.e., liberation, justice and love that are demonstrated and proclaimed

¹⁷Ignacio Ellacuria, Freedom Made Flesh (New York: Orbis Books, 1976), p. 93.

through manageable forms. Let us now look at the forms and structures evangelistic activities ought to take in the transitional church.

As with the early church, and the movements like that of John Wesley, the rudimentary form for evangelism remains the task of preaching. If the work of evangelism is to go on in the transitional community, then men and women, called of God and set apart by the Christian community, must articulate the church's fundamental belief and concept, and the Word that will motivate the local church and affect the neighborhood. Men and women in the often chaotic and frustrating transitional environment must heed the words of the Apostle Paul:

I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word, be urgent in season and out of season, convince, rebuke, and exhort, be unfailing in patience and in teaching... always be steady, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfil your ministry.

2 Timothy iv. 1-5

Part of the response to the new menace to the life of the church is to resolutely preach the good news that the community and congregation need; i.e., that God's love and salvation are active in the situation; and that this presence calls persons into relationship with others.

This means that the local pastor must be "steady" in the face of the changing situation. Among the persons of the congregation and neighborhood, the pastor must demonstrate the air of confidence and hope that comes

through faith in Jesus Christ. This confidence and hope must be clearly exhibited in the life-style, sermons, public addresses and general conversations of the pastor. The pastor must also be prepared to 'endure suffering,' which implies courage and the willingness to take the prophetic stance-- both in preaching and in life-style. This would mean that the hopes and fears, prejudices and biases which are often rampant in the local church and changing community, must be identified, analyzed in the light of the good news and called into question where need be. According to Paul, the local pastor must also be willing to 'do the work of an evangelist.' In the preceding chapter we noted that the early evangelists were taking the good news into the world, and to the people who most needed it. Thus, in the transitional community, the local pastor must be prepared to leave the pulpit on occasions and take the Word to people where they are-- in the parks, the stores, the homes, and the places of entertainment of the community. The local pastor must faithfully, sensitively and graciously proclaim the good news, which is at the core of the transitional church's ideation, if he or she is to be faithful to the continuing admonition to "fulfill your ministry." This means that the pastor must persistently articulate the good news in such a way as to assist the local church congregation understand that its purpose is to herald this same good news through word and by the standing in solidarity

with its community.

The particular model utilized by Jesus points to the second component of the evangelistic activities in the transitional situation.¹⁸ The pastor must strive to extend the center of evangelism through the development of a group of persons committed to the development of a comprehensive evangelistic program. This group must initially come together as learners, persons who are prepared to study the meaning of evangelism, its historical and theological understandings, available models and materials, and to devise appropriate techniques on the basis of this study, coupled with an analysis of the immediate community. This group will come into existence only through the singular evangelistic activity of the pastor; and only as he or she actively recruits members of the congregation and community who are desirous of participating in an effort which mediates salvation. A group of this nature must be seen as a source for new meaning and possibility for the church and for the neighborhood. On this level the pastor takes seriously the evangelistic model of the early followers of Christ who saw teaching and instruction as essential to ministry.

Our study of the models of the Pietists and the early Methodists highlights the fact that the organization

¹⁸See above, Chapter 2, p. 25-26.

and work of such a group is fundamental to any revival attempt; and can play a critical role in the evangelistic activities of the transitional church. This kind of group must become a "base church" within the life of the local congregation.¹⁹ Its task is threefold: (1) to develop a small but expanding community based on a "covenant relationship;" (2) to operate on the basis of the model established by Christ, where the disciples learned on the basis of "action reflection;" and (3) to be about individual and communal salvation.²⁰ In order to understand the full significance of this kind of group as a part of an evangelistic model for the transitional church, let us look more carefully at the threefold task of such a group.

We have intimated that the group must first be a "covenant community." This is a "redemptive community of love and trust," wherein the individual members are free to be themselves and encouraged to strive to reach their truest selves.²¹ As the individuals strive to be themselves and to reach their truest selves mistakes will naturally be made, and at times feelings will become raw. Therefore, it is important that the concept of Christian forgiveness be under-

¹⁹Charles M. Olsen, The Base Church (Atlanta: Forum House, 1973), p. 21.

²⁰*Ibid.*, p. 23f.

²¹Lance Webb, When God Comes Alive Through The Spirit-Renewed Church (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1968), p. 138.

stood and stressed; for only where forgiveness is present can humans attain the greatest freedom and remain in solidarity with one another.

The group will be comprised of persons with the will and courage, as well as those desirous of attaining the will and courage, to bring all persons into an experience of saving and freeing relationships with others. However, the source of this group making possible its existence as the community of love and trust is its desire to be in covenant with God through faith in Jesus Christ. This is the community whose corporate identity is the direct result of God's call, grace and judgment; and the community which has heard, understood and responded to the biblical revelation contained in Leviticus:

And I will give peace in the land, and you shall lie down, and none shall make you afraid; and I will remove evil beasts from the land, and the sword shall not go through your land. And you shall chase your enemies, and they shall fall before you by the sword. Five of you shall chase a hundred, and a hundred of you shall chase ten thousand; and your enemies shall fall before you by the sword. And I will have regard for you and make you fruitful and multiply you, and will confirm my covenant with you. And you shall eat old store long kept, and you shall clear out the old and make way for the new. And I will make my abode among you, and my soul shall not abhor you. And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and you shall be my people.

Leviticus xxvi. 6-12

The members of the congregation and community who join this group must consciously view themselves as entering a "new family"-- a healing, supporting and acting family-- that is responding to the call: "Follow, repent, deny, risk, work,

love and tell."²²

Therefore, this group is secondly a community that is learning in depth. It does more than simply study the Bible, the facts concerning the transitional community and their effects upon the the church, and the significant information on evangelism. This group must also devise meaningful ways to share the life together. Therefore, not only must it worship together and pray together, but it must program together and conduct those programs together, as well as participate in love feasts together. This group must put its faith to the test-- into action-- and then reflect on the outcome. It must be a community that not only expresses the good news in words, but which becomes the good news for the congregation and the community as it operates as a living, learning, growing family.

This group, then, becomes the core at the center of the transitional church, a church striving to be at the heart of the community and to mediate salvation. Here is the people who earnestly engage in becoming salvation; for they endeavor to live as the "responsible community"-- "a community of organized love."²³ It is a community which exhibits the victory and adequacy that comes when individuals are new creations in Christ, and are bound together

²²Olsen, p. 23.

²³Webb, p. 144.

by His love. The "responsible community" becomes capable of assisting the larger congregation keep in touch with true reality within the altering situation; and of enabling the congregation in the task of establishing and clarifying values. A community of this nature must find ways for men and women of the neighborhood to belong to the church, by admitting them into the covenant experience which has been created by the group in cooperation with the Spirit. This is very important, because the covenant community must be open and avoid becoming an elite group in the local church. Therefore, persons from the church and the neighborhood must always be free to join and participate in the new life of this group. Finally, it must give to the community and the congregation a sense of destiny and purpose, through planning and programming; and therefore, a life which has 'transcendent meaning.' This group, this nucleus, operating in the Spirit of Christ, calls men and women of the "whole" community; convicts them of faulty values and fears, and sins of omission and commission by its new life style; enables them to experience the grace of God and the death of the old; and the resurrection into new life with Christ. This is truly the drama of salvation.

If the United Methodist Church in the transitional community is to serve and survive, then it must place heavy emphasis upon the style of preaching outlined above, as well as upon the development of a nucleus which is prepared to

serve as a "base church." The "base church" concept in particular is critical because in many transitional situations heavy emphasis has been placed solely upon preaching and styles of worship; without intentionally seeking to develop a new community as discussed above. What this one-sided approach has done is to speed up the flight of the white congregation and the entrenchment of the white persons who control the local church's 'official family'. This has created an ambience wherein the early middle class ethnic minorities begin to attend the worship in more-or-less substantial numbers, while the whites continue control of whatever program and budget are maintained up until they decide to vacate-- without ever creating a Church. Of course, this blocks the creation of a new community or of new leadership to conduct the business of the local church. Furthermore, primarily as a result of internal friction and chaos, the development of a local church ministry which will meet the needs of the new neighborhood has been precluded. The fruit has been the slow death of the local church.

The creation of this kind of nucleus is important also because the United Methodist local church is geared to be highly structured, connectional and a vital institution. On the local level, the church is run through the Administrative Board in conjunction with the Council on Ministries. Both of these are comprised of chairpersons from the local church's eight work areas. These work area chairpersons are

responsible for the consideration, initiation, development and coordination of proposals for the church's strategy for mission.²⁴ And in the transitional church this structure evaporates as a fruit of the confusion and chaos which encumber the local church. As the white members depart, so do the leaders of the various work areas in the life of the local church. This leaves the local church without a possible "vehicle" for doing evangelism (as well as the other aspects of the church's mission), unless a nucleus can be quickly formulated.

This nucleus should be built upon the foundation of the local church's work areas, with the commission on evangelism at the core (if possible); and must strive to become a "vehicular base church"-- that is a core group of persons who see themselves as the vehicle for carrying the "total freight of the congregation's program and ministry" in the transitional situation.²⁵ As the local church structure for ministry begins to disintegrate in the transitional environment, the pastor and the leadership of the church must not see such a group as a threat; but as one means-- if not the only means-- for survival in the transitional environment. This group of persons must be given

²⁴The Book of Discipline (Nashville: United Methodist Pub. House, 1976), p. 132, Para. 251.

²⁵Olsen, p. 76.

immense latitude during the transitional period by the remaining whites and the new ethnic minorities, who will soon come to make up the new Administrative Board. As outlined above, this group will come to possess the marks of the Church, and to develop almost all programs for the life of the local church.²⁶ The pastor and Board will play a key role, however, since the "base church" will remain accountable to the Board for its actions and sustenance; and the Board will provide support and money for the group's missional projects. Further, the Administrative Board, through the Council on Ministries, will have the continued task of coordinating the work of the "base church" (or the energized work areas-- if one prefers) with the on going life of the local church as it is manifested in worship, stewardship, education, etc.

v We have now discussed the conceptual foundation and structure of the evangelistic model for the local church in a transitional community and seen how it relates to the local United Methodist Church's structure. To recapitulate, preaching and the development of a "base church" are fundamental components of this model. Before turning to a discussion of the method to be used by the local pastor and the emerging membership of the church, let us look briefly at the important issue of lay leadership development. If

²⁶Ibid.

the "base church" is to be productive, or more accurately, if the transitional church is to survive, then pastors must be surrounded by a trained laity, because it is highly unlikely that additional staff will be affordable and provided by the connectional system. For our work, the important question is: What is the nature of the training for lay persons who are desirous of doing evangelism from the "base church" in the transitional situation?

In a transitional church lay members need those skills which will help the local church and community dream dreams, and then turn those dreams into reality.²⁷ The first skills that members must gain are in the area of worship. This is the skill which will enable the group to find ways of grounding its experiences in the biblical witness, and dedicating its actions to God in prayer and adoration. Group dynamic and process skills are also important. These are the skills which will facilitate the establishment of the group and the development of the goals; the building of trust and cooperativeness within the community; and the making of decisions. Third, it is important that the laity possess skills in theological reflection. This is the ability of group members to draw upon the denominational heritage and the witness of the scripture in order to enhance the process of serving and evangelizing in

²⁷Ibid., p. 131.

today's world. The ability to engage the group in missional activity is the fourth skill needed by members of the laity. This skill involves a combination of those listed above, plus an understanding of the ways planning and goal setting takes place. In this area the skilled person helps the group pull together its resources and gifts in order to get the dream transformed into reality. Finally, the laity must have skills in the area of nurture and care. This is the skill which enables men and women, old and young, black and white, to work together and to learn from one another. The nurture and care skills are important in permitting the group to gain the most from each member of the community.²⁸

Such skills can be secured through colleges and seminaries, as well as through the district, conference and national boards and agencies of the United Methodist Church. The pastor and the Board of a local church can even plan and conduct their own training events in certain areas. The crucial thing is to define the nature of the evangelistic task; to uncover the skills needed to facilitate the program; and to learn in what areas the leadership must be strengthened to get the job done. Once this is done, assistance can be secured through the Superintendent of the District, or through local, secular agencies.

²⁸For a detailed discussion of these and other skills see Ibid., p. 114-138.

Some churches may even have trained persons in the congregation. It is important to emphasize at this point: lay persons, if they are to commit themselves to a "base church" must feel that they will receive the proper training so as to be of genuine service to the church and community.

The methods to be employed by those who seek to utilize this model are as old as evangelism itself. They are basically the methods of Jesus-- appealing, healing and feeding as means to get persons rightly related to God and neighbor.²⁹ The precise methods of any evangelistic model will vary to fit the community and the personnel; for the important thing is not the method but the results. In every situation the method must follow lines natural to the environment; that is, along lines which will not predispose persons against the call to become "new creatures" living as a part of a "new family."

Basic to any method of evangelism is the "appeal;" that powerful use of the Word to gain group and individual decisions, which are permanent and result in lasting personal religious activity.³⁰ The "appeal" must always be presented in such a way as to reach the intellect of the person, provide the impetus for soul searching deliberation

²⁹F. Watson Hannan, Evangelism (New York: Methodist Book Concern, 1921), p. 52.

³⁰Ibid., p. 48.

and strike a personal chord with the individual. This appeal can come in sermons, through Church School evangelistic efforts, or in specially planned mass meetings and revivals. Many other excellent opportunities for making use of the "appeal" can be created by a local church, or a "base church:" (1) through a church canvass, where backsliders and long absent members are visited; (2) through the visiting of persons who move into the neighborhood (this involves watching the housing patterns in the community); (3) by prudent conversations in social or church gatherings; (4) through the local church newspaper and letters to the congregation and community; (5) by meeting and questioning the visitors at the Sunday worship services; and (6) through adult study classes.³¹ It is important to note that the "appeal" must be consistently made to persons in and out of the church.

The second basic method is the action of "healing and feeding." This is the method by which the church goes to sinful humanity where it is-- in the misery and need which grips our cities. Through the work of "healing and feeding" the local church shows itself to be friend of the outside world in every month of the year; and it gains the confidence of those it seeks to evangelize. It is by

³¹Frederick DeLand Leete, Everyday Evangelism (New York: Eaton and Mains, 1910), p. 158.

this method that the church expands its ministry to entail missionary programs: day care for the children of working parents; tutoring programs for children unable to receive decent education in the declining urban school system; senior citizens programs; youth programs; housing programs; credit unions for the church and community; job referral and counseling; etc. In these missions programs the church meets people of the world on that "ground to get a hearing, but they must not be left on that ground."³² The sights of persons must be lifted so as to focus in God. The missionary deeds of the church help to translate the pious words which are expressed in the "appeal" into the kind of practical and realistic piety which makes persons "feel that God is right here in his world, knowing, helping and caring."³³ And this is evangelism at its best; for the church is active as a whole community mediating salvation to the neighborhood in transition.

If these, or any other, methods are to be effective and efficient the members of the "base church" must first come to know and understand the life-styles and habits prevalent in the community and among the persons it is trying to reach. On the basis of this understanding the methods can be adjusted to fit the particular occasion or situation.

³²Hannan, p. 50.

³³Ibid., p. 52.

However, by all means, the local church, the "base church" and the individual evangelists must be seen by the community as above suspicion, if the community is to be successfully evangelized. Therefore, it is important that the methods employed by a local church, "base church," or commission on evangelism be straight forward, avoiding the use of deception or gimmicks.

There may be as many methods as men, but the main thing is to get men (and women) rightly related to God and man; that is, to make the Christians who will get the will of God done in the earth. ³⁴

A Critique of the Model

In this section of the work we shall analyze and review the above model from the perspective of systems theory. The purpose of this analysis and review is to help us understand what the proposed model is suggesting to those who presently labor in the transitional church; and to help local pastors and evangelism committees recognize how evangelism can assist them organize and develop their slumping local churches. Of course, the whole subject of systems theory can not be considered in the following pages. However, let us begin with a description of how this discipline relates to our study, and informs work in the transitional church.

³⁴Ibid., p. 112.

The transitional church is from the systems theory perspective an organization in need of management. The church can be seen as an arrangement of parts (a system) which operates upon and is operated upon by the environment (the transitional community) in which it is located. This is "equilibrium" in systems theory. The rapid changes and class movements in the changing community create a situation of "stress" upon the church, and make for a situation of "strain" upon the church's internal structures.³⁵ The leadership of the church finds itself frustrated in an attempt to devise a style of ministry which will maintain organizational stability and assist the whole system toward growth in the new, emerging neighborhood. The internal structures of the church (its boards, councils and work areas) consequently become dysfunctional. The organization known as the local church begins to experience severe disorganization, is unable to operate upon the community and experiences the loss of its equilibrium.

Transition in the community is, for the church as a system, an "effective optimal" demanding a response from the organization.³⁶ The leadership, or managers, of the church can make one of three choices: (1) it can resist any

³⁵J. Feibleman and J.W. Friend, "The Structure and Function of Organization, in P.E. Emery (ed.) Systems Thinking (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1969), p. 39.

³⁶Ibid., p. 45.

change (the tenacious response); (2) it can resist change to a lesser degree, operating the church in a give and take manner within the changing environment (the elastic response); or (3) it can change yet remain true to the mandate of Jesus Christ by taking in elements (members) from the transitional community and transforming them to suit the church's purpose (the self-determinative response).³⁷ The first two responses tend to lend themselves to disorganization and then to the loss of equilibrium. This is true because the local church is weakened through the withdrawal of white members and the increase of untrained minorities; and the local church is unable to be the church by operating upon the transitional community in specific evangelistic ways. Only by choosing the self-determinative response can the local church remain flexible enough to alter the interactions within its inner life so as to be able to affect the life of its community.

Every system strives to attain three goals: stability, growth and interaction.³⁸ In the local church interaction is the system through which members associate with one another and gain a sense of satisfaction. In the transitional church, prejudices, racism and the dwindling member-

³⁷Ibid., p. 46-47

³⁸William S. Scott and Terence R. Mitchell, Organizational Theory (Homewood, Il.: Irwin, 1972), p.56.

ship, plus the collapse of the internal systems make interaction difficult-- if not impossible. The human organizations within the church are permitted to break down and are left in a heap. The goal of interaction is closely related to that of stability; so as the human organizations break down, the feelings of satisfaction and the purpose which give rise to the permanence of the local church come to an end as well. In this situation change, or growth, is impossible; and the local church is incapable of adapting itself to the new environmental conditions. This situation is generally the result of the leadership's election of the tenacious or elastic response to the environment. Thus, in order for the local church in transition to survive it must lose its life and thus strive to be a self-determinative system; i.e., a system that chooses the path that leads down the road to a never ending process of improvement based on a membership change. This change occurs by the selecting of what is most needed from the community so as to increase the system's internal complexity and interaction. Only in this way can the transitional church adapt to the environment and remain stable.

The self-determinative response is however the consequence of organizational management. It does not just happen. The decisions, activities, and behavior of any

organization is the effect of a "dynamic, life-giving element."³⁹ This element is called the manager or management. In the transitional church the manager or pastor, and the management (in this case the members of the Board and the base church) have three functions.

(1) To ensure that the church's gospel and ministries, so desperately needed by the people of the community, is received in a way which can be appreciated and shared in. In this way the leaders of the church improve or at least maintain the gifts entrusted to them. Through these gifts the church makes an impact on its community by the ministries which are carried out in order to reach the church's desired goals in the world. This function implies responsibility for attempting to shape the environment by planning, initiating and carrying through changes; and it implies the work of constantly pushing back the power and principalities which seek to limit the church's freedom of action. This is possible only as the leadership possesses a concept of the possible and of the desirable.

(2) To create a fruitful and productive organization out of human and material resources which are the church. This means that men and women must be assisted in their personal growth and development within the Christian

³⁹Peter F. Drucker, The Practice of Management (London: Pan Books, 1968), p. 13.

community and the organizational church.

(3) To organize the work of the church and to make that work suitable to the members of the church. Only when the work of the church finds acceptance and commitment in the congregation and meets the needs of people can the church's activities be productive and effective in the world. This can be done as the manager and management of the local church take seriously the emotional, physical, psychological and spiritual needs of the membership and community.

While these are the primary functions of the organization's leadership, there are two other critical activities which make it possible for the church to respond in a self-determinative manner to its environment. First, the manager must strive to balance present and future time. The manager and the management must assist the church to make those determinations and conduct those activities which will produce stability and growth as a result both now and in the future. Second, the manager assists the organization establish a common goal (which in our case is evangelism) and develop objectives which will control the performances of all members of the organization. Such objectives must be clearly delineated so that each person knows what is expected of him or her; what help can be expected and from where; and what contributions he or she is to make to the whole. These objectives make it possible

for the organization to operate as a team so as to gain team results. An organization's objectives are keyed to both immediate and long range goals. In the local church the philosophy of management should be shaped so as to give "full scope to individual strength and responsibility, and at the same time give common direction of vision and effort, establish team work and harmonize the goals of the individual with the common weal."⁴⁰ Only when such a philosophy is shaped and propagated throughout the organization can the transitional church be self-determinative in its environment.

Once the manager and management in the transitional church become aware of their functions then they can begin to ask at least the following questions:

What are the strategic parts of our system?

What is the nature of their mutual interdependency?

What are the main processes in the system by which the parts are linked and facilitated in their adjustment to one another?

What are the goals of the system?

These questions lead to the collection and synthesis of massive amounts of data and the making of decisions on the basis of this data. Such "decisions may be considered as the way by which organizations adapt to change."⁴¹ In

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 167.

⁴¹Scott and Mitchell, p. 176.

the transitional situation routine adjustments to change will not suffice, but rather are forerunners to the tenacious or elastic response to the environment. Only innovative or creative adaptations to change can give new life to the church. The "need for innovation arises when adaptation to a change is outside the scope of the existing programs that keep the system in balance. The organization has to evolve new programs in order to maintain its internal harmony."⁴² As we have seen, the transitional situation renders the existing programs, interactions, and structures of the church dysfunctional.

In our model we have suggested an innovation called "the base church," which has as one of its primary goals the maintenance of internal harmony while the church continues on through transition. The "base church" also seeks to assist the whole system move toward the self-determinative response to the community by: (1) involving persons from the new environment, so as to help the church adapt to this environment; and (2) making alterations upon the environment at the same time through evangelistic activities. From the standpoint of organizational development this component of our model could be described as a "pilot-

⁴²Ibid., p. 177.

project" or an "experimental team" that is a "suborganization" accepting the task of improving the whole organization.⁴³ At the bottom line, the "base church" is striving to "see if significant differences could be made in the climate, operating effectiveness, and productivity of a small segment of the organization through a planned 'intervention,' as a basis for considering larger efforts."⁴⁴

Essential to the overall effectiveness of this model is the leadership of the pastor and the ability of the "base church" to develop new leadership. A leader is mostly concerned with relationships between people. In this model the basic function of leadership is "the winning of consent and support..."⁴⁵ This consent and support must be won from church members and community persons, for the overall goal of the organization and for the objectives of the "base church." Related to this is the second function of leadership which is to "diagnose where the greatest readiness and capacity exists to carry out the commitments and priorities of the organization."⁴⁶ This readiness and capa-

⁴³Richard Beckhard, Organization Development (Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1969), p. 74f.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 76.

⁴⁵P. Selzuick, "Foundations of the Theory of Organizations," in Emery, p. 263.

⁴⁶Robert C. Worley, Change in the Church (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1971), p. 83.

city may be found inside the church or in the community; but wherever it surfaces it must be recognized and tied into the "base church." Leadership of this kind must be developed by the organization itself. Therefore, the pastor and the "base church" must energetically strive to identify those persons who either possess or desire to acquire the skills listed earlier;⁴⁷ and who naturally lead and have a high level of commitment to the Church of Jesus Christ and the base group.

Decision making is the third function of leadership in the base group. This task relates the leadership to the management. The decisions of the group must be geared toward the improvement of the operation and effectiveness of the "base church" in the area of evangelism; for from these decisions will come the actions which will most effect the local church in the future. The final function of leadership is to increase the freedom, the experience of salvation, of people in the group, in the organization and in the community.⁴⁸ This means that he or she must at times work to expose and destroy those entities which restrict and limit the individuals in the church and community; and in their evangelistic activities break down

⁴⁷See above, p. 92-93.

⁴⁸Lyle E. Schaller, The Decision Makers (New York: Abingdon Press, 1974), p. 178.

those barriers which block the members of the community from hearing and responding to the good news. The leadership needed to conduct the organization's functions can only be produced by the organization itself. The church in transition must strive to develop its own leadership.

In conclusion, this section should help the local pastor and the evangelism committee see that it is theoretically feasible and possible to organize the local church around evangelistic activities only and to formulate a "base church" or "pilot project" to initiate and maintain the program. This "base church" would need to view itself as being responsible for fulfilling the functions of management and of leadership in the organization; and it would seek to develop its own leadership. It should also be clear that systems theory provides additional conceptual handles for understanding the realities of the transitional situation and for interpreting appropriate responses for the local church in this environment.

We are prepared to now turn to the issue of how the local pastor goes about creating a "base church" in his or her local church. However, just before turning to this issue, it is important to emphasize that the goal is the creation of a leadership group operating as the "base church." The pastor must work hard to prevent this "base church" from allowing its boundaries to harden, or from precluding widespread participation in the struggle to renew

and strengthen the local church in transition. As the pastor works to establish this, or any model, he or she must continually hold the idea of renewal in mind. This means that the "base church" must be flexible and open enough to consistently serve as a community where resources for the development of a new church are to be found. The question is: How does a local pastor go about creating an open, flexible "base church" of this kind? This is the concern of the following chapter.

Chapter 4

A STRATEGY FOR THE LOCAL CHURCH

Introduction

With the proposal of an evangelistic model for the local church in transition and an analysis of this model from the perspective of systems theory many important questions remain unanswered. If local pastors and or commissions on evangelism are to utilize this model, then more help seems in order so they can renew and develop their church's life. This concluding chapter seeks to help pastors and leaders begin the critical task of organizing and planning to implement this model.

In the Epistle to the Ephesians we find these words:

It is he who gave apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers in roles of service for the faithful to build up the body of Christ...
Ephesians iv. 11-12

The following outline attempts to suggest a program direction appropriate for the pastor and other leaders to present to the local church's Administrative Board for its consideration and initiation as a church wide program centering on developing a "base church" for the purpose of leading the congregation in evangelism. It seeks to assist the pastor and the Board in the needed development of a long range goal, and then tries to provide some strategies for its achievement.

Goal

If an Administrative Board is to implement the model suggested in the foregone chapter, then it must accept as its goal: "to build up the body of Christ." And as to the question of how, the Bible responds: through "roles of service!" To put this statement in a less biblical frame of reference, the Administrative Board must first ask the question and then answer it: "In what ways should our Church continue to exist as a spiritual and missional center in this community?" (The answer to this question will give the Board a vision or image of the New Church.) Next the Board must ask itself: "What roles (positions and functions) are necessary for the creation and maintenance of this center?" (The answer to this question will provide the Board with the means to the Goal.) These are not rhetorical, simple or ludicrous questions! They demand serious, laborious attention; for they represent two very important factors in the life of the local church and its future.

(1) The church's reason and rationale for being, as defined by those persons who are responsible for its success or death-- a definition of the kind of church it shall be in the coming years; an understanding of what will hold it together; and what will serve as its foundation for growth. (Spiritual and motivational considerations.)

(2) The church's style and the content of ministry as it seeks to represent the living Lord in future years--

a description of the way the church will look as it moves from week to week; and what it will communicate to its members and community. (Organizational and evangelistic considerations.)

These two questions if properly worked through will inform the Board on how and why its church is; and they will inform it on how it can build Christ's body in the particular congregation and community, and by what particular roles of service.

The Administrative Board in each local United Methodist Church in transition is called to decide Yes or No with respect to its church's existence in the next decade or two. The future is contingent upon how successful the Board is in its endeavors to create a coordinated ministry that speaks to, and yet transcends, the realities of its membership and the immediate community-- with their sundry spiritual and physical needs. Each Administrative Board is called to say Yes or No with respect to God's citadel in the transitional community; and to cooperate with or oppose the will of God:

My cities shall again overflow with prosperity, and the
Lord will again comfort Zion and again choose Jerusalem.
Zechariah i. 17

The future is, in black and white, a question of faith and courage! The future will be a struggle; for God is calling the local church in the transitional situation to renew its life and by this process the whole city.

Specific Areas of Need

As we have seen, the prosperity of the local church and the inner city are interrelated. The church's finances, its membership and its evangelistic program are tied to the present and future of the community it is called to serve. The future of the local church's School and the worship services are dependent upon the community. This fact can no longer be denied or avoided. The transitional church's dwindling membership roll and church school attendance testify to this fact! The failure of the church to come to the local church's assistance gives further credence to this reality.

The local church's leadership must seek to formulate its goal for the future as it tackles this reality through the main local church areas of concern:

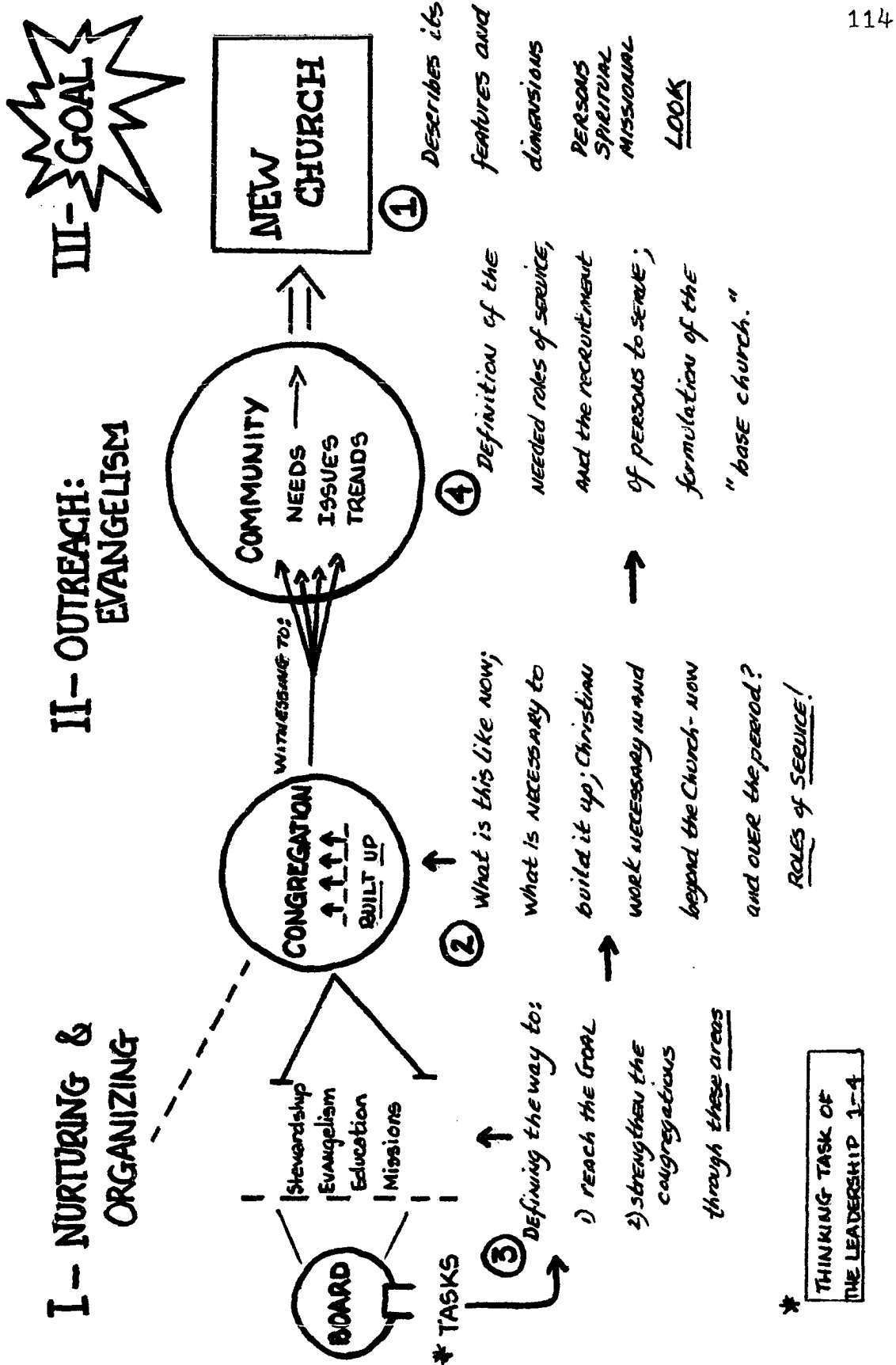
- 1) STEWARDSHIP-- the use of individual and organizational time, talents and resources;
- 2) EDUCATION-- the study and teaching of Christian doctrine and values for life in the last decades of the twentieth century;
- 3) EVANGELISM-- the call of persons to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior of life, and the advancement in practical and physical ways of the Kingdom of God on earth.

These areas must be so organized and managed as to provide for the nurture of existing members, so as to empower them to fill the appropriate roles of service necessary to build up the body of Christ! This means that the leadership must devise means for educating, uplifting, coordinating and

sending forth the membership. The leadership must work with members in the development of a program that will guide them and involve the community, in spiritual and evangelistic activities to alter the life-styles of all concerned (i.e., in the building of the New Church which will live in the interim between now and the coming of Christ).

Perhaps the most important aspect of the Board's considerations along these lines is the development of a COORDINATED, well balanced church program with evangelism at its heart. Stewardship can not be isolated from the other areas. Finances can not be pushed at the exclusion of education. Each aspect of the program must be interrelated (placed, so as to come in mutual space and time) in order to achieve the overall goal: to build up the body of Christ. Each program strategy must be clearly focused to facilitate positive change in all areas of the church's life. Every working individual must feel him or her self to be apart of the total program body; and know exactly how the contribution made fosters the program of the church as a whole. To fail in this aspect is to fall short in the nurturing of the membership, which will result in confusion, disorganization and atrophy!

The church goal then is to build up a spiritually strong, educated and coordinated congregation (or base church to begin with) that is using its time, talents and resources to do evangelism. Let us look at this goal pictorially:



Initial Steps

Now that the Board has some idea of where it has to go; and understands that it can arrive there only through hard thinking, work and service of God and one another, an immediate course of Church action is in order. (It must be emphatically stated here that prior to any steps being taken the Board must first work through the above in its own way; and it must have approved that which is to follow as well. This is so that the Board is capable of assisting the entire church through the steps-- steps which may well prove painful and difficult due to the situation in the transitional church.)

Step 1. "Town Meetings" throughout the first month following vacation season. These town meetings (for the lack of a better concept) will follow regular Sunday morning services (although they may be extended or held on a week night). These meetings have the following purposes:

- a) to acquaint the congregation with present programs and the general condition of the local church's spiritual and organizational life. (knowledge and information sharing.)
- b) to unveil the commitment of the Board to build up the body of Christ, to help the members understand its implications, and to gain their support. (Contracting, commitment gaining, and support rallying.)
- c) to afford the congregation an opportunity to participate in the answering of the two critical questions found in the Goal section above. (Participation and sharing, and the chance to buy in to the process by having their concerns added to the program.)

d) to allow the work area and age level leaders the chance to present ideas, receive feedback and recruit members to serve in the base church. (Leadership recruitment and development, beefing up the organization which will carry through the final program in conjunction with the Board.)

Step 2. "Church Planning Session" the first Saturday in the following month. The goal is to establish a total church goal for a two year period with a matching budget. At this meeting the base church will be finalizing its specific objectives, and organizing its membership for the work to be done. The goal and objectives will be formulated on the basis of reports coming from across the life of the local church and the analysis conducted by the Board.

Step 3. "Installation of the Base Church" at the following Sunday's worship service. The final goal will also be presented, along with the finalized objectives of the base church.

Step 4. "Follow-up Meetings" to monitor and evaluate all program activities and to coordinate the ongoing work of the church with that of the base church. The base church, of course must meet frequently. The Board should be committed to a meeting every two months on the most convenient date. Its business should be recorded and distributed to the congregation in report form so as to keep all members informed about the total effect of the base church program and its impact upon the life of the church.

To be sure, this is only an outline. Only the local

churches and their memberships, under the direction and motivation of their leaders can adapt and transpose this scheme into a reality with the possibility of turning the local church and the community "upside down." (Acts xvii.6) In these pages a strategy for assisting the Board and pastor think through the process has been suggested.

Conclusion

Who among us can forget the story of Daniel, and the hand writing on the wall of King Belshazzar: "MENE, MENE, TEKEL AND PARSIN?" (Daniel v. 25) Across Methodism the writing in the hand of a man has appeared before the eyes of all ethnic minority congregations: "God has numbered the days of your kingdom and brought it to an end; you have been weighed in the balances and found wanting; your kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians." (Daniel v. 26-28) God has weighed the ethnic minority Methodist church in the balances and found it wanting; and has divided its kingdom among the Baptists and Pentecostals. The black church in the transitional community has been placed on trial and found wanting-- we have misused and misappropriated the blessings and grace of Almighty God. As a people, we have ceased to love our God with a holy zeal, and terminated the service to our Church as the citadel for reconciliation, hope and salvation. Over the years we have allowed God's people to become drunk with the

wine of luxury and so-called success, and encouraged our children to fall prey to the deadly drugs of apathy, complacency and worldliness. In more recent years, we have turned a deaf ear and a callous heart to the true meaning and mission of Christ's Church; and have thereby made the church the Sunday social club--- powerless and empty. The handwriting is on the wall of every black United Methodist Church in transition.

And, yet, in the midst of us, one can hear the voice of the Savior, the Very Son of God, crying out: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent, and believe in the Gospel." (Mark i. 15) This day we can choose! The God of righteousness and justice is extending to us the hand of mercy, vindication and peace. The God of righteousness is making available to the transitional church the path way to love and salvation. This same Savior has already paid the price for our redemption. All that is demanded is that from this day forward we follow him. All that is demanded is that from this day we walk in the way everlasting, and struggle to create in our churches new base churches committed to evangelism. In the WAY EVERLASTING, Denney writes:

The one right thing to do in the presence of the revelation and appeal of God in Christ is to stake one's life upon it for good and all.

The transitional church must stake its life upon the call of Christ to build upon his body. Do we have a choice?

Is there another option? Is there a better way? Can you suggest this more appropriate solution? If not, then, reflect upon these words of Florence Allshorn:

No situation is impossible. If you believe that it is, you have no message of salvation. Refuse to accept defeat. The sight of conquered Christians is the real desperate tragedy of our day.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Albright, W.F., and C.S. Mann. Matthew. (Anchor Bible.)
Garden City: Doubleday, 1971.
- Barclay, Wade D. History of Methodist Missions. 4 Vols.
New York: Methodist Church, 1949.
- Barth, Karl. Church Dogmatics. 4 vols. in 1.
New York: Harper & Row, 1962.
- Bauer, Walter. A Greek-English Lexicon, ed. W.F. Arndt and
F.W. Gingrich. Chicago: University of Chicago Press,
1957.
- Beckhard, Richard. Organization Development.
Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1969.
- Bonner, Daniel E., Jr. The United Methodist Church In
Transitional Communities. New York: Methodist Board
of Global Ministries, 1976.
- Bornkamm, Gunther. Jesus of Nazareth.
New York: Harper & Row, 1960.
- Brown, Stanley C. Evangelism in the Early Church: A Study
In The Book of The Acts of the Apostles. Grand
Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963.
- Bultmann, Rudolf. Theology of the New Testament. 2 vols. in
1. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951-53.
- Curry, Norris S. Theoretical and Practical Views of Spirit,
Laws and Discipline Evangelistically Understood in
the Methodist Way. Los Angeles: Methodist Church,
1976.
- Davies, J.G. The Early Christian Church: A History of Its
First Five Centuries. Garden City: Doubleday, 1967.
- Davis, James H., and Woodie W. White. "Patterns of Pluralism."
Unpublished Report, United Methodist Church Missional
Strategies Workshop, San Francisco, August 1976.
- De Jong, Pieter. Evangelism and Contemporary Theology.
Nashville: Tidings, 1962.
- Dobschutz, Ernst von. The Apostolic Age. London: Elsom,
1910.
- Dodd, C.H. The Apostolic Preaching and Its Development.
New York: Harper & Brothers, 1960.

- Drucker, Peter F. The Practice of Management. London: Pan Books, 1968.
- Dullus, Avery. Models of the Church. Garden City: Doubleday, 1974.
- Ellacuria, Ignacio. Freedom Made Flesh. New York: Orbis Books, 1976.
- Ensley, Francis G. John Wesley Evangelist. Nashville: Methodist Pub. House, 1958.
- Feibleman, J., and J.W. Friend. "The Structure and Function of Organization," in F.E. Emery (ed.) Systems Thinking. Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1969.
- Filson, Floyd V. Three Crucial Decades. Richmond: John Knox Press, 1963.
- Frazier, E. Franklin. The Negro Church In America. New York: Schocken, 1966.
- Greenway, Roger S. Calling Our Cities to Christ. Nutley, N.J.: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1973.
- Hannan, F. Watson. Evangelism. New York: Methodist Book Concern, 1921.
- Harnack, Adolf. The Expansion of Christianity In the First Three Centuries. 4 Vols. New York: Putnam, 1904.
- Hendriksen, William. Matthew. (New Testament Commentary.) Grand Rapids: Baker, 1973.
- Hightower, Charles. "Ethnic Churches-- A Concern of All," Interpreter. XX:3 (March 1976), 18-20.
- Holmes, Urban T. The Future Shape of Ministry. New York: Seabury Press, 1971.
- Hubbard, Benjamin J. The Matthean Redaction of a Primitive Apostolic Commissioning. Missoula: Society of Biblical Literature, 1974.
- Jones, Ezra Earl. "Rationale, Questions and Assumptions," in Ezra Earl Jones (ed.) New Church Development In The Eighties. New York: Methodist Church, 1976.
- Strategies for New Churches. New York: Harper & Row, 1976.

- Jones, Lawrence A. "The Sought A City," in C. Eric Lincoln (ed.) The Black Experience in Religion. Garden City: Anchor Press, 1974.
- Latourette, Kenneth Scott. A History of the Expansion of Christianity. 4 Vols. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1937.
- "Pre-Nineteenth-Century Evangelism: Its Outstanding Characteristics," in Evangelism. (Madras Series) New York: International Missionary Council, 1939.
- A History of Christianity. 2 Vols. New York: Harper & Row, 1975.
- Leete, Frederick DeLand. Every-Day Evangelism. New York: Eaton and Mains, 1910.
- Nagler, Arthur W. Pietism and Methodism. Nashville: M.E. Church, South, 1918.
- Olsen, Charles M. The Base Church. Atlanta: Forum House, 1973.
- Overton, J.H. The Evangelical Revival In the Eighteenth Century. London: Longmans, Green, 1886.
- Quere, Ralph W. Evangelical Witness. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1975.
- Roark, Dallas M. Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Waco, Tx.: Word Books, 1976.
- Schaller, Lyle E. The Decision Makers. New York: Abingdon Press, 1974.
- Schmidt, Martin. John Wesley. 2 Vols. New York: Abingdon Press, 1972.
- Scott, William S., and Terence R. Mitchell. Organization Theory. Homewood, Il.: Irwin, 1972.
- Selzuick, P. "Foundations of the Theory of Organizations," in F.E. Emery (ed.) Systems Thinking. Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1969.
- Shaw, J. Beverly F. The Negro In the History of Methodism. Nashville: Parthenon Press, 1954.
- Sheppard, H.R.L. The Impatience of A Parson. Garden City: Doubleday, Doran, 1928.

- Steward, James S. A Faith To Proclaim. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953.
- Suggs, M. Jack. Wisdom, Christology and Law In Matthew's Gospel. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970.
- Ward, A. Marcus. The Gospel According to St. Matthew. London: Epworth Press, 1961.
- Webb, Lance. When God Comes Alive Through the Spirit-Renewed Church. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1968.
- Wilson, Robert L., and James H. Davis. The Church in the Racially Changing Community. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1966.
- Woodson, Carter G. The Education of the Negro Prior to 1861. New York: Arno, 1968.
- Worley, Robert C. Change in The Church. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1971.
- The Oxford Annotated Bible, ed. Herbert G. May and Bruce M. Metzger. New York: Oxford University Press, 1962.
- The Book of Discipline. Nashville: United Methodist Pub. House, 1976.
- "The Church in Transition: From Abandonment to Mission." A Summary of the Church In Transition Training conducted in Nashville, 1972. Nashville: Association for Christian Training and Service.
- Daily Christian Advocate. IV (Portland: 1976)